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PARTICIPATORY EDUCATION AND RURAL CHANGE

by

© DIP PRAKASH KAPOOR

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

IN

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

Edmonton, Alberta

Spring, 1995

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to develop a participatory perspective on education and rural change. It was assumed that such a perspective would provide rural change agents, nonformal educators and "outsiders" with a renewed understanding of their role in rural education and change.

The study was guided by three related objectives: To examine analytically (1) the concept of nonformal education (NFE), primarily in terms of its stated purpose and prescribed role in the process of rural change; (2) the evolving concept of participation in the rural change process; and (3) the possible link between NFE and participation in the rural change process.

Development of a participatory perspective on education and rural change was viewed by the researcher as an opportunity to engage in an act of conceptual construction/re-construction (an interpretive or constructivist approach to research methodology) that was based on (1) the experiential understanding and reflection of actors (change agents) in the field and (2) the conceptual/theoretical literature on participation, NFE and rural development.

Change agents from non-governmental organizations engaged in a NFE Literacy Project in Nepal and a Community Health Project in India discussed their perspectives in open-ended interviews. This formed the basis for developing two analytical case studies. Emergent themes from these case studies suggested two different approaches to participation, NFE and rural change which are referred to as the modernization approach to rural development and the reformist approach. Themes from the two case studies were then probed and extended with the help of pertinent literature on participation, NFE and rural development by undertaking an assumptional analysis of the two apparent and emerging perspectives. The case studies and the literature-based assumptional analysis of emergent themes from the case studies formed the basis for developing the suggested participatory perspective on education and rural change -- a perspective that is a blend of a desirable (normative perspective) and a possible (experiential perspective) direction for participation, education and rural change. The strength of this perspective lies in its reflexive potential (for change agents and social researchers) and in its potential for facilitating rural change.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION....1
Statement of Purpose and Problem....2
Significance of the Study....3
Problem Clarification in a Crisis of Existence....3
Change Agent Perspectives....4
Conceptual Integration of Participation and NFE....5
Background to the Problem....5
Assumptions, Delimitations and Limitations....7
Organization of the Thesis....9
2. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND....11
The Context of NFE and Participation: Rural Development....11
The Modernization Approach to Rural Development....11
Alternative Approaches to Rural Development: The Reformist Approach....13
NFE and Rural Development....17
International Educational Planners/Experts and the Evolution of NFE....17
Education, Learning and Lifelong Education....18
Random, Nonformal and Formal Education....20
The Role of Education/NFE in the Modernization Approach to Rural Development....23
Critics of Schooling and the Evolution of NFE as Popular Education....25
Structuralist critique of formal education....26
De-schooler's critique of formal education....28
The Role of NFE as Popular Education in the Reformist Approach to Rural Development....30
Participation and Rural Development....31
Participation and the Modernization Approach to Rural Development....32
The Nature of Participation....32
Obstacles to Participation....34
Arguments for Participation....34
Participation and the Reformist Approach to Rural Development....35
The Nature of Participation....35
Obstacles to Participation....37
Arguments for Participation....43
Rural Development, NFE and Participation: A Conceptual Summary....43

3. METHODOLOGY 46
Theoretical Considerations 46
Research Emphasis 46
Participant's meanings 46
Process 47
Natural setting, researcher as instrument and inductive analysis..........47
Reality 48
Causality 48
Facts, Theories and Values 49
Research Strategy 52
Research Process 54
Gaining Access 54
India. 54
Nepal. 55
Data Collection: Methods and Sources 56
India 56
Nepal 58
Data Analysis 58
Analytical Review Of The Literature 59
Research Trustworthiness 60
4. A NFE LITERACY PROJECT: SAVE THE CHILDREN (U.S.) IN NEPAL 62
Context: Nonformal Education Literacy Program 62
The Country: Nepal 62
Geography 62
Economy, politics and administration. 62
Culture and religion 63
Health and education. 64
The Organization: Save The Children U.S. (SAVE) 65
Development strategy 65
Project sectors, projects, donors and cooperating organizations. 66
The NFE Literacy Program in the Gorkha District 67
The Gorkha district and the NFE literacy program participants. 68
The Change Agents: Research Participants 70
Change Agent Perspectives on Participation in NFE Programs: Emergent Themes 71

  Changing Rural Individuals and Communities: Encouraging Participation in NFE Literacy Programs, Program Planning, Pedagogy and Curriculum Development 71
    The development problem: Securing program involvement, winning over minds, correcting wrong ways and removing social evils, and providing a message to bring about improvements in their situation. 72
    The development problem: Need for building local capacity, organization and leadership and awareness of governmental services 74
    The development problem: Need for tangible material inputs and resources 74
    Participation in planning for NFE literacy programs. 75
    Participant-centered pedagogy 78
    Curriculum and learner-generated-materials. 79
  Other Meanings: Participation in NFE Processes as Sensitization or Empowerment ? 80
    The development problem: Guided participation by persuaders 80
    The development problem: The need to link participation and empowerment. 81
    The process of empowering education: Listening to their problem, posing questions for discussion, sharing avenues and options, injecting/vaccinating or blending new ideas. 81
  Other Meanings: Participatory NFE as a Movement for Regeneration and the Democratization of Culture 84
    The development problem: Nurturing traditional participatory culture and avoiding alien structures of non-participation. 84
    The process of participatory NFE for regeneration and the democratization of culture 86
Reflections on Emergent Themes 88
  NFE for Reproduction or Regeneration: Questions of Purpose and Problem 88
  Education, Material Support, Dependency and Non-participation 89
  Educational Intervention as Change through a Process of Blending Ideas 91

5. A COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT: OXFAM AND BGKS IN INDIA 92
Context: The Community Health Project..........92
Participating Organizations..........92
Oxfam (India) Trust..........92
Bapuji Gramya Kalyan Samaj (BGKS)..........94
Rural Participants: The Members of BGKS..........96
Habitat and livelihood..........97
Literacy status, educational practice and medicinal practice..........98
The Community Health Project: A BGKS-OXFAM Initiative..........99
The Change Agents: Research Participants..........101
Change Agent Perspectives on Participatory NFE: Emergent Themes..........102
Participatory NFE: Breaking Mental Frames and Taking Collective Action for Rural Change..........103
The development problem: The nature of dependence, control and mental frames..........103
Participatory NFE as empowerment: Breaking the mental frames of dependence and organizing for collective action..........107
Participatory NFE and rural change..........109
Participatory NFE: A Process of Developing Relationships..........112
Non-controlling relationships: Obvious problems, actors and spectators..........112
Communicating Trust: Being with them, adding value and understanding biases..........114
The process of developing non-controlling and trusting relationships..........115
Reflections on Emergent Themes..........124
Participatory NFE: The Struggle to Free the "Subject"..........124
Participatory NFE: A Process of Integration..........126
6. INTERPRETIVE SUMMARY OF THE CASE STUDIES..........128
Change Agent Perspectives on the Nature and Desirability of Participatory NFE and Rural Change..........128
The Nature of Participatory NFE..........128
Participating in NFE Programs for Rural Change: The NFE Literacy Project..........129
Purpose of the change effort..........129
Target of change..........129

Means employed to implement participation in NFE programs. 129

Participatory NFE as a Movement for Rural Change: The Community Health Project 130

Purpose of the change effort 130

Target of change. 130

Means employed to implement participatory NFE. 131

The Desirability of Participatory NFE 132

The Desirability of Participatory NFE: A Reflection on the Question of Ethics and Effectiveness 132

An Assumptional Analysis of the Two Case Studies 133

The Method of Assumptional Analysis 133

The Purpose of Assumptional Analysis 134

7. THE NFE LITERACY PROJECT: AN ASSUMPTIONAL ANALYSIS 136

The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Social and Individual Change 136

Social Evolutionism, Modernization , Dualism and Diffusionism.......... 137

Equilibrium and Societal Maintenance 140

The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about the Nature, Role and Method of Education 141

Nature and Role of NFE: A Means for Social Maintenance and Diffusion 141

NFE Strategy and Method: Maintenance and Prescription 143

Education and Individual Change 144

The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Education and Participation 147

Education on Participation as a Means: Education as Diffusion of Information on Participation as People's Contribution 147

Education on Participation as a Means: Education as Diffusion of Information on Participation as Organization 148

Participation, Education and the Question of Economic Base.......... 151

Modernization, NFE and Participation: An Ethical Evaluation of the Rural Change Process 153

Choice of Goals to Which the Change Effort is Directed 153

Definition of the Target of Change 154

Choice of Means Used to Implement the Intervention 155

Assessment of Consequences 156

8. THE COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT: AN ASSUMPTIONAL ANALYSIS 158
- The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Social and Individual Change 158
    - The Relationship of Development (as Modernization) to Underdevelopment: Diffusion as Dependency 159
    - Structure, Determinism and Free Will 160
    - Dependency, Cultural Invasion, the Culture of Silence and Critical Consciousness 162
    - Reform: Conflict, Equilibrium and Social Articulation 165
    - Development as a Pluralistic and Normative Concept: Another Development 166
    - Development as a Process of Education for Conscientization (demystification), Collective Action and Structural Transformation (and Transformation of Consciousness) 167
- The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about the Nature, Role and Method of Education 168
    - The Nature and Role of NFE: Education for Liberation, Emancipation and Transformation 168
    - NFE Strategy and Method: Individual/Social Transformation and Process 169
    - Education and Individual Change 172
- The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Education and Participation 174
    - Education on Participation as a Fundamental Dynamic: Education as Awareness Raising on Participation as Empowerment through People's Contribution and People's Organization 174
    - Participation: The Primacy of People and People's Knowledge 176
    - Education on Participation as a Conscious and Deliberate Process 178
- Reform, NFE and Participation: An Ethical Evaluation of the Rural Change Process 179
    - Choice of Goals to which the Change Effort is Directed 179
    - Definition of the Target of Change 179
    - Choice of Means used to Implement the Intervention 180
    - Assessment of Consequences 182

9. TOWARDS A PARTICIPATORY PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION AND RURAL CHANGE 183
Issues and Propositions on Participation 183
Issue One: What is the Development Problem ? 183
Issue Two: What is Participation ? 184
Issue Three: What Defines the Participatory Process ? 186
Issues and Propositions on Education for Participation (or Participatory Education) 190
Issue Four: What is the Content of Participatory Education ? 190
Issue Five: What is the Process of Participatory Education ? 192
Issue Six: Who are the Participatory Educators ? 193
Issues and Propositions on Participatory Education and Rural Change 193
Issue Seven: What would Constitute a Process of Rural Change that was Facilitated by a Process of Participatory Education ? 193
10. DISCUSSION AND REFLECTIONS 196
Discussion on the Research Objectives 196
The Purpose and Role of NFE in the Rural Change Process 196
Participation and Rural Change Process 197
The Link between NFE and Participation in the Rural Change Process 198
Discussion on the Significance of the Research 200
Change Agent Perspectives 200
Conceptual Integration of Participation and NFE 200
Problem Clarification in a Crisis of Existence 201
Reflections on Research Methodology and the Research Experience 201
Reflections on Future Research Possibilities 202

REFERENCES 204

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE PAGE

1. The Modes and Characteristics of Education 22

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Almost forty years of international and national development efforts have passed without any apparent fundamental change in the lives of the rural poor in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Phillip Coombs (1968, 1985) identified a world crisis in education in the late sixties and then, again, in a subsequent "systems analysis" in the mid eighties. Similarly, participants at The World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, March 1990) re-affirmed an international commitment to the "right to an education for all", after having recognized that over a 100 million children still have no access to schooling of any kind, while some 960 million adults are considered to be illiterate.

As an international educational planner, Coomb's original analysis (1968) and subsequent research and recommendation in several publications, advocated the need for a complement and supplement to the formal system of education, i.e., nonformal education (NFE). Currently, NFE is widely accepted as an educational strategy for meeting the learning needs of marginalized people. Traditionally, it refers to a broad range of learning activities, conducted outside the institutionally centered system of formal education and is usually designed to promote literacy, personal health and well-being and income generating skills.

It is noteworthy, that the origin of the NFE label and the achievement of any subsequent theoretical and methodological status is credited largely to international educational planners, such as Phillip Coombs and institutions like UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). That is, NFE is an educational initiative being promoted, planned and controlled primarily by international multilateral agencies (United Nations Agencies and the World Bank) and national governments. What if, as Nerfin (1989) suggests, neither the "Prince" (Governments) nor the "Merchant" (Financiers) are serious about contributing to the search for alternatives, to address the concerns of the poor majority ? What if they are more part of the problem than part of the solution ? That is, could NFE be yet another palliative from the rich and powerful to the poor and weak ? Could this be the explanation for the lack of any fundamental change in the condition of the poor after four decades of "assistance" ?

Such critique and the concurrent search for alternative conceptualizations of rural development and education have led to what La Belle (1986) regards as the major issue regarding NFE in this decade, i.e., the extent to which the poor should be "involved" in NFE programs as participants in determining their own destiny -- the "citizen's/people's" alternative to the "Prince" and the "Merchant". For instance, advocates of popular/critical education (as opposed to what is refered to by international educational planners as NFE), like Paulo Freire, see education as an opportunity for people's participation in a process that re-affirms their cultural identity. Popular education provides people with the opportunity to gather around collective interests in order to combat prescriptive development and educational practices and political-economic manipulation, with the hope of realizing their vision of the good life.

Similarly, given albeit a possibly different purpose, the original advocates of NFE, like Phillip Coombs, have also been looking at different ways in which to encourage "participation" and "involvement" of rural beneficiaries in NFE programs being intiated by the international agencies, national governments and voluntary agencies funded by these two sources.

This research is part of the search for perspectives on education that emphasize participation of the people in their struggle with the process of rural change.

Statement of Purpose and Problem

This study was undertaken with a view to developing a participatory perspective on education and rural change. It was hoped that such a perspective would provide rural change agents, nonformal/popular educators and "outsiders" with a renewed understanding of their role in rural education and change.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To examine analytically the concept of NFE, primarily in terms of its stated purpose and prescribed role in the process of rural change.
2. To examine analytically the evolving concept of participation in the rural change process.
3. To examine analytically the possible link between NFE and participation in the rural change process.

These objectives were addressed with the help of: (1) change agent (individuals currently engaged in the practice of NFE in the "field") perspectives on the nature and desirability of participatory NFE for rural change and (2) the conceptual and theoretical literature on (a) international/rural development, (b) participation and rural development and (c) NFE and rural development. The research aimed to integrate pertinent "ideas and concepts", from theory and practice, in order to develop the desired participatory perspective on education and rural change.

Significance of the Study

Problem Clarification in a Crisis of Existence

Phillip Coombs makes it abundantly clear in "The World Crisis in Education - The view from the eighties" (1985), that rural populations in developing countries are facing a crisis of existence that provides much cause for concern and a compelling need for action.

According to UN demographers, over 40 percent of the world's population (majority of whom reside in the rural areas of developing countries; according to Gunstilleke (1978) the number is two-thirds while a UNESCO report (1974) places it at 80%) are living at the ragged edge of existence, below subsistence levels. Despite the large migration to the cities, the rural population in most of the developing world is expected to be substantially larger by the end of the century than at present; this is because of the especially high birth rates in rural areas. The rural population in these countries is estimated to increase by some 22 percent by the year 2000, from 2276 million in 1980 to 2774 million. This means that the already deep and extensive rural poverty is likely to spread, especially in the already overcrowded countries of Asia and parts of Africa and the Middle East (Coombs, 1985, pp. 51-52). The pressures of people against arable land, water supplies, healh provisions, transportation, educational facilities and other essential household and community services are destined to increase.

Health indicators such as the percentage of the population with access to safe drinking water, daily calorie supply and ratio of physicians to population are euphemistically speaking, discouraging; the per capita food production of 19 of the poorest countries (per capita incomes of less than $100) has declined from 5 to 59 percent between 1969-80; and the vast majority of rural people are landless and unable to grow enough to feed themselves (Coombs, 1985, pp. 51-52).

What does the future have in store for the children of the poor ? The infant mortality rate is at 124 deaths per 1000 for the 33 developing countries classified by the World Bank as low income (per capita annual incomes from $80 to $410 U.S. in 1980 dollars). According to the "State of the World's Children" (UNICEF, 1990, p. 4), 40 thousand children lose their lives every day. Measles, whooping cough and tetanus, all of which can be prevented by inexpensive vaccines, kills almost eight thousand children per day. Similarly, six thousand child deaths a day can be explained by pneumonia and eight thousand from diarrhoeal dehydration. About fifteen hundred children go blind each day from vitamin A deficiency and 150 million under the age of five suffer from malnutrition. And the largest generation of children ever to be entrusted to mankind -- half a billion children -- will be born in the 1990s (UNICEF, 1990, p. 4).

As far as schooling is concerned, if we (as rural outsiders) were to uncritically assume that the existing system of "formal" education (modern/urban education) is the only appropriate, desirable and necessary system of education for rural inhabitants, then again, the statistics help to demonstrate the state of "deprivation". It has been projected, that by the year 2000, six out of every seven primary-school-age children will be from a developing country and almost 4 will be from a rural area (Coombs, 1982, p. 38). Of the 100 million six-year-olds who will begin their school careers in 1990, approximately 40 million are likely to drop out before completing primary education (UNICEF, 1990, p. 47). In the Asia and Pacific region alone, the dropout rate at the primary level is as high as 80 percent. Moreover, about 59 percent of the total population of children and youths between 6 to 23 years are out of school (Shakya, 1985). Almost all of these children will be illiterate for the rest of their lives and will be unable to fully participate in, or benefit from, their lives in the fullest possible manner. According to Coombs (1985), the absolute number of illiterates will continue to increase at the present rate and reach more than 900 million by the year 2000. The World Conference on Education For All (1990) held at Jomtien, Thailand, placed the number of adult illiterates at some 960 million.

In human terms, we are morally compelled to accept the responsibility for addressing this social catastrophe through reasoned and compassionate action. The need for continual analysis towards definition and clarification of the "problem" and an associated "appropriate approach" towards its resolution, is as essential as the need for immediate action to help alleviate the suffering and indignity endemic to this crisis. This study represents one such effort at "problem clarification" and identification of possible "approaches" to addressing the problem.

Change Agent Perspectives

Change agents are the people who have a relationship with the NFE program participants. These agents and the organizations they work for, have the responsibility of working with marginalized people and they make people's participation in the educational and rural change process, possible. Including their experiential and empirically based perspectives in the development of a participatory perspective on education, it is hoped, will enrich the perspective being developed, by bringing the analysis closer to the point of action. The attempted conceptualization draws mainly from themes presented by these agents and utilizes the literature to further develop these practice-based understandings. Consequently, the perspective developed by this research ought to be of some significance to change agents, if not to academics and theoreticians, as a reflective base for practice and for theorizing.

Conceptual Integration of Participation and NFE

Academic consideration of the concepts of NFE and participation in the rural development process is marked by a specialized treatment of the concepts, while occassional recognition is given to the possible overlap/link between them (Kindervatter, 1979; La Belle, 1986; Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Oakley, 1991). For instance, NFE has been the preoccupation of educational specialists (planning, curriculum/materials development, pedagogy/andragogy, teacher/facilitator training) while participation in rural development is the domain of the rural sociologist and/or the agricultural extension specialist. Meanwhile, the complexity and inter-relatedness of problems in the rural change process demands a more integrated approach to practice (Oakley, 1991). Consequently or concurrently, academic treatment and reflection ought to encourage and stress the importance of such conceptual integration, especially, where it would appear to be beneficial. It is hoped that this study proves to be of some significance in this regard.

Background to the Problem

NFE was a dominant mode of education in colonized societies, prior to their colonial subjugation and consequent emphasis on formalized education (Bacquelaine & Raymaekers, 1987). Today, NFE is an accepted international strategy for meeting the educational needs of rural people marginalized by or who have not been able to benefit from the process of modernization/urbanization. This has become the case since international educational planners, backed by their powerful institutional affiliations, recognized what they refer to as a "world crisis in education" (Coombs, 1968, 1985).

This "crisis" has been defined in terms of the failure of the formal education system in meeting the educational needs of the majority of humankind, most of whom live in the rural environment of developing countries (Coombs, 1968, 1985; Hallak, 1990; Neihoff, 1977; UNESCO, 1980, 1986). Schools have been and will be unable to accomodate all school age children, to reduce the dropout rate and to develop relevant curriculum in relation to the learning needs of the rural poor (Coombs, Prosser & Ahmed, 1973; Simmons, 1980). The "crisis", as spelled out, is one of not being able to extend formal education to those who are deemed by rural outsiders, such as these experts, to "need such an education". For instance, a UNESCO report (1986) and Hallak's report (1990) from the IIEP, cites access to and relevance of formal education as the major reasons for educational decline in developing countries. The problem is discussed in terms of the need for increased operational efficiency in order to improve access, while also emphasizing the necessity of meeting the budgetary considerations of indebted national governments. Similarly, relevance is discussed largely in terms of "cultural sensitivity or is derived from basic/life needs compulsions", with a view to affect assimilation into the "modern mainstream" in a more pragmatic fashion (La Belle, 1986).

Such a position fails to question the desirability of the social and individual impact of the institutional practices of formal education. It fails to question the distinct possibility that the structure of formal education and its dynamic relationship to the systemic considerations of modern state centered economy hold the very seeds of discontent and deprivation that are now being alluded to as a "crisis" (Apple, 1990; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Carnoy, 1974; Kozol, 1982; London, 1973). And if the latter is perceived to be true, it would be ironic at the least and catastrophic at most, if we were to rely on the same system of education to inform and shape a "new" mode of education (NFE) and/or rely on such an approach to solve problems that are essentially a result of the colonial/post-colonial application of this very approach (Kindervatter, 1979). Consequently, Lyons (1975) suggests that while NFE is being advocated by members of these powerful "elites" as a panacea for members of the marginalized masses, "the scope for such exploitation in institutionalized NFE is abundant". Because these advocates suggest NFE as an extension of formal education, Lyons (1975) suggests that it will most likely be institutionalized in a like manner.

The "critics of schooling" and of "modernization" have raised such questions (Carnoy, 1974; Freire, 1970a; Illich, 1971; Kozol, 1982; Reimer, 1971). Critical analysis seeks to disclose the inequality inherent to the system of modern economy and its associated insititutional role for formal education (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Neo-Marxist structural critiques suggest the need for revolutionary change towards socialist structures and the corresponding social relations of production in order to address these inequities -- along the lines of transformation achieved in countries like China, Nicaragua, Cuba or Tanzania (Arnove, 1986; Carnoy & Torres, 1990). "Reformist perspectives", however, tend to de-emphasize the role of a centralized state apparatus, arguing for "people's participation" in an educational process that seeks to "empower" individuals and their communities in a process of "cultural articulation". Under a "reformist perspective", the individual is not subordinated to society (conceived as the nation state), as is a common tendency in modern nation states (capitalist or socialist) organized around their respective relations of production and economy (Freire, 1970a; Illich, 1971). However, the latter will not occur unless people are "conscientized" to the need and the possibilities (Freire, 1970a); "conscientization" being essentially an educational process (popular/critical education as opposed to the NFE label), as people have been "oppressed" and "domesticated" by such "state-centered/production system centered" regimes, that have forced them into a "culture of silence" (subverted individual and collective consciousness) and encouraged a selfdebilitating "fear of freedom" (Freire, 1970a). Such "objectification" of the people by the state, "objectification" because individual needs and aspirations are subordinated to the needs and plans of the capitalist/socialist nation state, requires a process of re-discovery, where people learn, again, to be as "subjects" and "agents" of their desired change process; the people regain their lost "voices". Consequently, education and people's participation are integral to a process of reform, as individuals, communities and their respective societies are seen to be "democratized" by this process of "conscientization" (Freire, 1970a, 1973, 1975, 1994).

The discussion spawned by these critics of schooling and formal education has also influenced the analysis and project orientation of international educational planners, the multi-lateral agencies and national governments. "People's participation" in NFE projects and rural development projects became a part of the linguistic diet of these agencies in the mid 1970s (Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Oakley, 1991) and according to Peter Oakley (1991), we are now in the "age of participation". However, there is no single definition of the concept and its use depends on the assumptions behind the rural development agenda of the respective agents (Oakley & Marsden, 1984). Furthermore, the concept of "participation", while being linked to the concept of NFE and Popular/Critical education, is linked based on the differing assumptions about rural change and development, held by groups subscribing to either label (Carmen, 1991; Kindervatter, 1979; La Belle, 1986; Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Oakley, 1991).

The link between participation, NFE and the process of rural change needs to be explored with the view to improve conceptual clarity, given (1) the scope for "alternative conceptualizations" based on the different approaches being aluded to here and (2) the possible overlap between these concepts and the consequent need/possibility for conceptual integration.

Assumptions, Delimitations and Limitations

The following assumptions have been made while conducting this research:

1. Education, based on a participatory perspective, has the potential to make a positive contribution in the lives of marginalized and depressed socio-economic groups in the rural communities of what is commonly refered to in the literature as the "developing world" or "Third World" or "underdeveloped countries".
2. There are links between the concepts of "NFE" and "participation" as they relate to the rural change process. The concepts can be integrated.
3. The development and refinement of a "participatory perspective" can improve the understanding and therefore the practice of education in the rural change process. This can translate into improved life prospects for the affected groups of people.

4. Change agents can and will be keen to verbalize their empirically based perspectives on the subject being studied.
5. Change agent perspectives and verbal descriptions/analysis are indicative of and based on their practice (empirically grounded).
6. For methodological/epistemological assumptions, see Chapter Three on Methodology, especially the section on Theoretical Considerations.

The research was delimited to **NFE and NFE as Popular Education**, in the **rural areas** of what is refered to as the "Third World" or the **"developing countries"** and more specifically, South Asia or the **Indian subcontinent** (India and Nepal). The participatory perspective on education was formulated from perspectives presented in interviews by eleven change agents, currently engaged in field work, who worked for two different organizations in NFE programs with two different focuses (health and literacy). The case studies were delimited to a period of six weeks each and not more than two formal ninety minute interviews was alotted for each participant. The case studies focused on participant's verbally presented perspectives/meanings and not on verification of presented perspectives through observation of behavior and program actions/implementation.

Literature analyzed and utilized in the process of building the desired "participatory perspective" was delimited to the following descriptors: (1) international/rural development, (2) participation and rural development, and (3) NFE and rural development. Only conceptual and theoretical literature was considered (as opposed to case studies and empirically based materials). Systemmatic analysis of the literature was only conducted after the data from the case studies were analyzed. Consequently, the emergent themes from the case study analysis helped to delimit analysis of the literature, as the themes provided the basis for exploration and analytical examination of the pertinent literature.

The quality of the study is limited by the accessible literature on the subject. Furthermore, the ability and willingness of participants to verbalize their perceptions and ideas and the researcher's limited identification with context and the consequent potential for communication gaps/misinterpretations/superficiality could have also limited the potential of this research. The absence of the voices of rural participants (excluded on ethical grounds) will limit the attempted conceptualization. Future research on this subject will most certainly have to include this vital and missing perspective, in order to enhance its relevance and to help complete the picture. Consequently, it needs to be emphasized, that the presented conceptualization is strictly from the point of view of change agents and academics/literature (also a delimitation of this study).

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis can be seen to have been developed in four parts. Part One, consists of Chapters I through 3, where all the chapters deal with subject matter that helps to introduce the pertinent background to the study. For instance, Chapter 1 provides an introduction and a statement of purpose for this research study while Chapter 2 is an analytical description of the conceptual background to the study that introduces the pertinent concepts of NFE and participation, in the context of the literature on rural/international development. Similarly, Chapter 3 introduces the research methodology, the epistemological and methodological assumptions, the research strategy and a description of the research process undertaken to develop the two case studies conducted in Nepal and India.

Part Two consists of Chapters 4 through 6, all of which deal with the case study or field-study related empirical material. For instance, Chapter 4 is a description of the case study conducted in Nepal. This chapter includes a contextual background to the NFE literacy project being conducted by SAVE The Children USA (SAVE) and the emergent themes from interviews conducted with change agents from Nepal. Similarly, Chapter 5 deals with the description of a case study conducted in India -- the Community Health Project conducted by two organizations, Oxfam (Orissa) and Bapuji Gramya Kalyan Samaj (BGKS), and the emergent themes from interviews conducted with these change agents. Chapter 6, meanwhile, provides an interpretive summary of the emergent themes and reflections on these two case studies.

Part Three, consisting of Chapters 7 and 8, focuses on a literature-based assumptional analysis of the "emergent themes" generated in Part Two or the case/field study. Chapter 7 consists of an assumptional analysis of the themes generated from the Nepalese case study -- an analysis which is carried out with the help of the pertinent literature on rural/international development, NFE and participation. Similarly, Chapter 8 includes a literature based assumptional analysis of themes from the case study conducted in Orissa, India. The intent of this section is to "probe" and "expand/build" on the empirically based meanings and interpretations forwarded by change agents from the field with the help of the pertinent literature on the subject. This was seen to be a valuable exercise in terms of helping to develop the participatory perspective on education and rural change.

Part Four, consisting of Chapters 9 and 10, is the "reflective" part of the thesis, where Chapter 9 describes the desired "participatory perspective on education and rural change", based on the analysis conducted in Chapters 4 through 8. The concluding chapter, Chapter 10, is a discussion on meeting the research objectives and the significance of the study, with reflections on the research method/experience and suggestions for future research possibilities/directions.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The following review of the literature is a brief conceptual analysis of NFE and participation in the context of the literature on rural/international development. The review is developed in three sections: (1) The Context of NFE and Participation: Rural Development; (2) NFE and Rural Development; and (3) Participation and Rural Development.

The Context of NFE and Participation: Rural Development

The concepts of NFE and participation are both inextricably linked to concepts and theories of rural and international development (Kindervatter, 1979; La Belle, 1986; Oakley, 1991). While the following discussion is an overview of rural development, a more explicit analysis of assumptions is considered in Chapters 7 and 8, chapters in which the emergent themes from the case studies are further analyzed with the help of the literature on the subject. Rural development as a concept and/or theory is discussed in terms of the dominant approach to rural development, namely, (1) the modernization approach and then, in terms of alternative approaches or what is being referred to, for the purposes of this study, as (2) the reformist approach.

The Modernization Approach to Rural Development

While it is impossible to pinpoint the shift in development thinking with any historical certainty, the mid 1970s saw the start of the shift away from the domination of the orthodox development approach, encapsulated in what has come to be termed as the "modernization" approach (Korten, 1984; La Belle, 1986; Nerfin, 1977; Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Oakley, 1991). This approach emphasizes economic growth and industrialization in the context of increased centralized planning and control over the distribution of resources. Korten (1984, p. 299) describes "modernization" in the "past tense" as follows:

> . . . its dominant goals were production-centered. Its values, systems and methods were geared to the exploitation and manipulation of natural resources to produce an ever-increasing flow of standardized goods and services and to the creation of a massified consumer society to absorb them. It created great bureaucracies that organized society into efficient production units -- centrally controlled and functionally defined -- and a trading and financial system that linked all the nations of the globe. Its management systems were designed to maximize rates of increase in system throughput and the health of its societies was judged largely by indicators of such increase (GNP) on the premise that they translated automatically into corresponding improvements in human well-being.

The newly emergent nations of the 1950s, most of whom are referred to as the "Third World" or "underdeveloped world" were to be "modernized" through an approach that stressed "injections" of capital inputs (physical/financial/scientific and technical) from the "First World". This was the answer to the problems of poverty and underdevelopment. The latter condition was perceived to exist because of the "problem of production and economic growth", which the "injections" were to alleviate. This was to result in "take off" and the eventual spread of benefits throughout the system and these countries would "progress" and "develop" up the "evolutionary ladder" that had already been climbed by those nations who had gone through the stage of industrialization. The emphasis was laid on providing the infrastructural facilities and institutions to facilitate this climb and on tackling the obstacles that were to be found on the way. As far as "obstacles" were concerned, Oakley and Marsden (1984, p. 5) describe the rural development process as follows:

> In this context, the rural poor within these developing countries were not seen as the major resources for furthering the process of development, but rather as obstacles, and attention was turned to mobilise them through mass education and community development programmes to reach the critical "take off" point into self-sustained growth. The rural areas were perceived to be lagging behind the national development effort; agriculture had to be modernised and improved to support the industrialization process. Projects and programmes designed to smooth the path were formulated by urban administrators and planners and little attention was paid to the rural populations who were regarded as traditional, even primitive, and who, in a paternalistic way, needed to be educated out of their ignorance.

To put it succinctly, under the "modernization approach" poverty and underdevelopment were the results of insufficient production and economic growth which, in turn, could be remedied by "injections" of physical, financial, scientific/technical and cultural/educational capital from the "First World". "Third World" countries and their people would be "assisted" in this manner, up the evolutionary path that the former group had already experienced. Rural/international development was primarily about physical/material growth; it was the realm of the economic expert; and it was a science of the "object" or of "physical goods" (Carmen, 1991).

This approach became synonymous with the agencies of the United Nations, national governments of both the communist and capitalist/socialist-democratic type and of world financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Transnational corporations and private lending institutions, in their quest for economic profit, are also critical players in the execution of this approach. The World Bank (1975, p. 5), for instance, views rural development as follows:

> Rural development is clearly designed to increase production and raise productivity. Rural development recognizes, however, that improved food supplies and nutrition, together with basic services such as health and education, can not only directly improve the physical well-being and quality of life of the rural poor, but can also directly enhance their productivity and their ability to contribute to the national economy.

Development, whether it was rural, national or international, had become synonymous with economic growth and productivity.

Alternative Approaches to Rural Development: The Reformist Approach

With the experience of some four decades, gradual disillusionment with this vision was growing and the systematic search for alternatives was underway. As stated earlier, this became a conspicuous occurrence in the mid 1970s. Criticism of the "modernization approach" was leveled at its political-economic effect, its sociological impact, the environmental impact and its impact on and implicit assumptions about culture and the role of different value orientations. Critique was also leveled at the epistemological foundations of the approach (scientific rationalism).

Dependency Theorists like Frank (1969) and Bernstein (1977) began to re-interpret and reconstruct the problems of poverty and underdevelopment in the "Third World". The relationship with the "First World" and the "Third World" and between the "rich" (normally "urban") and "poor" (normally "rural") was being described in terms of "dependence" and "exploitation" -- both normative concepts that were very difficult to define, except in relation to particular historical circumstances.

New questions were being posed by these theorists. How far, for example, was the continuing poverty of newly independent countries linked to the former colonizing powers ? How far was the industrialization process dependent on maintaining that poverty ? Is "active underdevelopment" to be linked directly to continuing relations of subordination ? Dependency theory is characterized by a marked pessimism about the possibilities for development, particularly capitalist forms of development. It is argued that such forms of development inevitably increase existing inequities and engender the enrichment of a few at the expense of the many. As Oakley (1991, pp. 5-6) puts it, with regard to national development:

> Such strategies [modernisation, that is] tended to ignore the growing cleavages in society which the 'benefits' of modernisation seemed to be producing. There were massive dislocations of populations as a result of urban migration and increasing evidence of growing inequalities as certain sections of society seemed to be able to capture the benefits whilst others, a growing majority, were excluded from them. These strategies were based on a rather one-sided view of society in which it was assumed that people could and should live in harmonious communities working for the benefit of the nation.
>
> Public emphasis was placed on nation-building and on community development. It was seldom acknowledged that such processes might be being built upon social orders which were far from democratic and that support was being given to maintain and entrench sometimes very inegalitarian social systems, however inadvertently.

While modernization could be shown to have benefited the lives of some rural people, in most Third World countries the majority of them benefited little or have even become worse off (Griffin, 1974; Pearse, 1980). Dependency theorists refer to these national dichotomies as "internal colonization", a form of colonization that is manifest in the subordination of particular regions to the capital city, of rural to urban areas, of poor people to rich patrons, of share-croppers to landowners and of women to men (Oakley, 1991).

Furthermore, their attention has also focused on the subordination of nations to other nations where the obstacles to development are perceived to lie, not in the "traditional" and "backward" nature of society, but in the subordinate and marginalized role that Third World countries have in the world economy. It is further argued that the ruling elites within these countries have co-operated with international capital to obstruct an independent development, and that they have encouraged an "unbalanced" development in which attention is focused on capital-intensive luxury consumer goods industries (as opposed to "needs-based") while unequal terms of trade ensure that surpluses are transferred out of the country, thereby stunting the development process (Oakley, 1991). George (1988) and Bello (1989) analyze the debt crisis to demonstrate this process of exploitation while George (1984) also looks at questions of world food production, distribution and hunger in the same vein.

Dependency theory has its roots in a history of colonial expansion and is a reinterpretation of that expansion. Rather than being seen as a "civilizing" process, the colonial experience is reinterpreted as a history of "subordination" and "exploitation" and as such has resulted in a profound distrust for "outsiders". Dependency theory, therefore, calls for autonomous development strategies (Chambers, 1983; Oakley, 1991).

This call has been answered in the form of "another development" (Haque et al., 1977; Nerfin, 1977; Dag Hammarskjold Foundation), "people-centered development" (Korten, 1984, 1990; Gran, 1985), "autonomous development" (Uphoff, 1987; Verhagen 1987), "self-reliant, participatory development" (Burkey, 1993; Bhasin, 1985; Fuglesang & Chandler, 1986; Nyerere, 1968; Rahman, 1981, 1993), "anti-development" (Max-Neef, 1989), "liberation, emancipation and conscientization" (Fals Borda, 1988; Freire, 1970a, 1994; Guitierrez, 1973) and "ethical or authentic development" (Goulet, 1971, 1974, 1976). For the purposes of this study, these perspectives and, both, their particular and common assumptions will be referred to under the broad label of what La Belle (1986) refers to as "reform" (referring to a social/individual theory of change) -- "the reformist approach to rural development".

While these development alternatives do not coalesce around a "universal model", certain common/important threads are as follows: (1) development (capitalist/socialist) has become capital-centered as opposed to people centered; it has by-passed or even marginalized people in its concern to build and construct; (2) the mere increase in production of goods does not translate into improved life experience for all -- poverty is structural and its roots are in the economic and political conditions that control poor people's lives (poverty is an issue of power imbalances); (3) poverty and underdevelopment, as well as being a function of physical impoverishment, is also a state of mind or a level of consciousness, a "culture of silence" where people traditionally without a voice in helping to determine the course of their lives (non-participation/objects of development) felt powerless to exert an influence on the forces that shaped their lives; and (4) development must not be simply cogniscent of physical necessity but also of the cultural necessity of people to articulate "what one shall live for" and "how" -- of the need for affection, understanding, participation, idleness, creation, freedom and identity.

Oakley (1991, p. 11) characterizes rural poverty, as described under these "alternatives", in terms of: (1) lack of access to resources for development, (2) lack of viable organizations to represent their interests, (3) the dominant power of local feudal structures, (4) the dependent and marginalized nature of their lives, and (5) the air of despondency and despair which characterizes their lives.

Under a reformist approach to rural development, two types of critique take on special significance: (1) political-economic critique, such as those advanced by the dependency theorists and that of neo-marxists (highlight domination and creation of dependence and exploitation through the social relations of production -- national and international -- and the reproduction of a hierarchical social structure) thereby calling for structural transformation and (2) cultural critique, such as those formulated by de-schoolers like Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich or ethical critiques of development by the likes of Denis Goulet (highlight domination and the creation of dependence and exploitation through cultural processes like education, religion and other forms of psychological domination/manipulation -- the focus on individual and collective consciousness) thereby calling for cultural pluralism and freedom.

While the former critique has been briefly alluded to under the "Dependency Theory" thesis, the latter focus on cultural critique specifies the need for "alternative articulations" of what a society ought to and can be. The emphasis is on socio-cultural change or deliberately organized efforts by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture (Wallace, 1956). Senegal's former President, Leopold Senghor expresses this assumption when he says, "We Africans do not wish to be mere consumers of civilization" (quoted in Goulet, 1992). Implicitly, Senghor argues that no people wishes to commit cultural suicide by repudiating its history and identity, on the grounds that such a sacrifice is the only road to modernity; and that the "global culture" now in gestation worldwide needs the contribution of African civilizations to counter the economic and cultural reductionism still in force in dominant paradigms of modernity.

According to Goulet (1975), "Development is not a cluster of benefits 'given' to people in need, but rather a process by which a populace acquires a greater mastery over its own destiny" (p. 155). Or, "The key issue of the development debate is control over development processes, not men [and women] sharing in development's benefits" (Goulet & Hudson, 1971, p. 45). Goulet maintains that this issue gets at the root of a critical component for development, namely "the difference between being the agent of one's own development as defined in one's own terms and being a mere beneficiary of development as defined by someone else" (Goulet & Hudson, 1971, p. 19).

Goulet maintains that development most fundamentally concerns power relationships, since development occurs through change processes which involve control over nature and production, and control over other people. Hence, if development goals and strategies are to reflect the values of a population, members of that population must have control over decision-making in all aspects. In this regard, Roberts (undated, p. 13), defines development as "the more equal distribution of power among people", including physical, economic and cultural power. He states that the major task of development is "making the maximum number of people confident, aware, and eager to question." Similarly, Gutierrez advocates a definition of development as "liberation" (1973). Since control of development decisions at present is blocked by dominant national and international elites, real development can only occur when these constraints are challenged and overcome. Gutierrez (1973) conceives liberation as liberation from oppressive forces and for the full development of the human personality as agents and subjects of their process of change.

"It follows from this view of authentic development that innovation can be good only if it is judged by the concerned populace to be compatible with its image of the good life and good society" (Goulet, 1971, p. 207). Goulet (1975) suggests that this is not only ethical but also effective because development shaped by a people's values is based on changes that they can accept -- he refers to the need to take into consideration people's "existence rationality", i.e., their ability to understand and integrate the change in the context of their present values.

Nyerere's (1968) conceptualization of rural development (quoted in Oakley, 1991, p. 2) represents a contrast to the definition provided by the World Bank (to illustrate the modernization approach to rural development) and manages to capture some of the features of the above mentioned "alternatives":

> Rural development is the participation of people in a mutual learning experience involving themselves, their local resources, external change agents and outside resources. People cannot be developed, they can only develop themselves by participation in decision and co-operative activities which affect their well-being. People are not being developed when they are herded like animals into new ventures.

Under this scenario, development has more to do with individual/social education and participation in the individual/community change process with the view to empower people culturally, economically and politically, than to do with the pursuit of increased physical productivity and economic growth of a nation.

NFE and Rural Development

According to Grandstaff (1974, pp. 1-2),

> one possible way to 'target' inquiries into nonformal education is to relate the concept of nonformal education to the concept of development. . . . Assuming that education is usually an instrument toward some more general social goal, rather than an end in itself, our study of it has clarity and usefulness to the extent that it is informed by an understanding of that toward which it is an instrumentality.

While the above section on rural development does not explore the prescribed role for education under the various approaches to rural development, the connection to and the desired place of education can be inferred. Education cannot be neutral as an ingredient in the process of social and individual change. Most of those who write about or practice NFE are concerned with its relationship to change, both, at the societal and individual level. NFE is at the center of the contest between interest groups seeking to influence if not determine the means for maintaining and achieving socio-economic and political goals (La Belle, 1986). "Implicitly, if not explicitly, educational forms, content, relationships and processes contribute to certain outcomes that impede or achieve a certain desired development" (Kindervatter, 1979, p. 58). Or, as Paulo Freire (1978, p. 15) expresses it:

> The organization of the programmatic content of education is an eminently political act. . . . Thus, in concerning myself with what should be known, I am also necessarily involved with why it needs to be known, how, to what end . . . and in whose interest . . ..

Similarly, the concept of "non-formal education", has evolved and been promoted differently by the various agents of development, given their preferred approaches to development. The following conceptualizations have been put forward, broadly speaking, by two groups referred to by Evans (1981, p. 18) as (1) international educational planners/experts and (2) critics of schooling.

International Educational Planners/Experts and the Evolution of NFE

NFE was a dominant mode of education in colonized societies, prior to their colonial subjugation and consequent emphasis on formalized education (Bacquelaine &

Raymaekers, 1987). Education was a family and communal responsibility, as older generations passed on knowledge to the next generation through oral communication and stories while occupational knowledge was learnt from demonstration and practical learning experiences. While formal educational structures did not exist, organized basic learning opportunities were provided by religious institutions such as churches, temples, mosques and monasteries (Coombs, 1985).

However, it was not until the late 1950s and mid 1960s that NFE gained "theoretical and methodological" status, along with greater institutional support for such learning activities. Coombs (1968) referred to a "world crisis in education" and was the first to popularize the term NFE to signal the need to consider a wide variety of resources for teaching and learning, resources that were necessary, among other reasons, to respond to the high cost, unavailability, and inadequacy of schools (La Belle, 1986).

As an educational planner and member of UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP), the legitimacy and funding offered by international development agencies helped to ensure the popularity of the NFE label coined by Coombs. Supported and funded primarily by the World Bank and the Ford Foundation, the most visible pioneering work regarding NFE was done by Coombs (1968), Coombs and Ahmed (1974) and Coombs, Prosser and Ahmed (1973).

Four other efforts -- at the University of Massachusetts (Evans, 1977, 1983; Center for International Education, 1975, 1982) (focus on instructional product development and program implementation), Michigan State University (Brembeck, 1983; Brembeck & Thompson, 1973; Grandstaff, 1974) (focus on conceptualization and training and information dissemination), Florida State University (Bock & Papagiannis, 1983; Klees & Wells, 1978; Mayo, 1980) (focus on program implementation and evaluation) and the University of California at Los Angeles (La Belle, 1975, 1976, 1986; La Belle & Verhine, 1975; Wilbert, 1976; Poston, 1976) (geographical focus on Latin America and the Caribbean) -- were funded primarily by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

These international education specialists helped to conceptualize NFE by (1) questioning the distinctions between education and learning and emphasizing the emergence of the concept of lifelong education (critical of the "only schooling equals education" model); (2) through the development of conceptual distinctions between random, nonformal and formal education; and (3) prescribing a desired role for NFE under a modernization approach to rural development.

Education, Learning and Lifelong Education. The distinction between education and learning is crucial to the understanding of one of the major conceptual shifts -- the shift from education to lifelong education. It has only been over the last twenty five years that the ability to learn from infancy to old age has been widely recognized.

While education has been described by some as a "social invention created to enable groups of individuals to learn effectively, efficiently and for the benefit of society; a systematic and sustained effort by society to ensure the transmission of its cultural heritage from generation to generation in a controlled/manipulated environment (educational institution)" (Blunt,1991, p. 38), learning is societally ubiquitous and on-going/continual. Furthermore, learning is more an individually oriented/driven process. The societal connotations characteristic of education do not necessarily govern the process of learning which is geared more to a person's inclination and conscious/unconscious exercise of personal choice based on necessity or otherwise.

Educational processes involve the selection of knowledge, values, and skills to be learned, and the manipulation of conditions within the learner's immediate environment to maximize the likelihood that learning will occur. This occurs in a "formal instructional setting" where the focus is on being systematic and efficient. Jensen (1964) points out that learning, on the other hand, can occur in both, the "natural societal setting" and the "formal instructional setting". In the "natural societal setting" learning is not usually consciously directed but occurs spontaneously while learners participate in daily activities in the work place, during social engagements and in leisure pursuits.

While the notion of lifelong education can be traced back to the philosophical contributions of John Dewey, more recently, Coombs, Prosser and Ahmed (1973), have proposed that educational activities do not have to be time-bound and place-bound because education is a lifelong process that can take place in any environment without any formal structures.

In this regard, the members of a Unesco task force stated that,

> man is an unfinished being and can only fulfill himself through constant learning. If this is so, then education takes place at all ages of life, in all situations and circumstances of existence. It returns to its true nature, which is to be total and lifelong, and transcends the limits of institutions, programs and methods imposed on it down the centuries. (Faure, Herrera, Abdul-Razzak, Lopes, Petrovsky, Rehnema, & Ward, 1972, p. 143)

This statement clearly suggests the possibility for lifelong learning in any situation and for human beings to satisfy their learning needs in different contexts. The conceptualization of lifelong learning was a major contribution to broadening the scope of education. This concept opened the way to developing educational activities beyond the formal system, even though lifelong education also encompasses the formal system. In terms of a lifelong education concept, learning activities can be organized both formally and nonformally.

The concept of lifelong education shifts attention from schooling to learning. Knowledge and skills acquired through schooling may not be adequate to satisfy the diverse needs and problems that human beings encounter because schooling operates under a number of constraints. First, the learning objectives and programs are prescribed by a bureaucratic system. Second, scanning crucial needs and envisioning responsive learning programs tend to be overlooked. Third, schooling may be regarded primarily as a means for producing a workforce to serve the economic system, and may give low priority to learning activities that have the potential to bring about other qualitative improvements in life (Faure et. al., 1972).

Although all human beings strive to survive and succeed, the skills and knowledge that are required can not easily be demarcated. Human life involves many unforseeable circumstances; in order to cope with them knowledge and skills have to be acquired continually. Various needs arising out of such circumstances cannot be fulfilled with what is learned through schooling. Education as learning for life includes much more than the conventional "academic" skills and subject areas. Occupational skills, household skills, analytical and critical thinking skills and the development of aesthetic appreciation are but a few examples which fall within the scope of learning (Coombs, Prosser, & Ahmed, 1973). Diverse areas of learning have relevance in relation to learners' varied life needs; consequently, nonformal education assumes importance as a need-responsive strategy for learning.

Random, Nonformal and Formal Education. An understanding of the extent to which various educational strategies/approaches differ from or are related to each other provides insights into the concept of nonformal education. Evans (1981), as well as Coombs, Prosser, and Ahmed (1973), and Hamadache (1991), identified differences between three approaches to learning -- random (incidental and informal), nonformal and formal.

Random education includes non-structured educational activities, categorized by Evans (1981) as follows:

Incidental education, when there is neither a conscious attempt to promote learning on the part of the source nor a conscious attempt to learn on the part of the receiver. Neither the teacher nor the pupil sets up a 'learning situation'.

Informal education resulting from situations where either the learner or the source of information has the conscious intention of promoting learning, but not both (in which case it would be classified as nonformal education).

In "random learning", education is a process of osmosis between learners and their environment. This applies to learning one's language, cultural values, general attitudes and beliefs, and the behavior patterns of a given community, which are transmitted by the family, the Church, associations, prominent members of society, social communication, the mass media, museums, games, and all other cultural institutions in an environment. To a large extent, such education is obtained through a combination of observation, imitation, and emulation of specific members of society. For example, radio or television broadcasts for the general public may, to some extent, be intended to instruct, but they may or may not find listeners or viewers who are willing or able to learn from the message or put it to use.

The evolution of the concept of **nonformal (or out-of-school) education** proceeded in the absence of any clear definition of nonformal education until this oversight was eventually addressed by Coombs, Prosser, and Ahmed (1973), when they defined nonformal education as

> any organized educational activity outside the established formal system - whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity - that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives. (p. 11)

They provided further clarification of the concept with a supplementary statement to the effect that,

> any educational activity falls into the nonformal category if (a) it is consciously and purposively organized and systematically pursued, (b) with a view to facilitating particular kinds of learning by a particular learning clientele and (c) it is not an integral part of the formal educational system. (p. 11)

In terms of Evan's (1981) definition, NFE is any non-school learning where both the source and the learner have conscious intent to promote learning.

Formal (school) education, differs from nonformal education in that it is taught in institutions (schools) by permanently employed teachers within the framework of a fixed curriculum. This type of education is characterized by uniformity and a certain rigidity, with horizontal and vertical structures (age-graded classes and hierarchical cycles), and universally applicable admission criteria. Such education is intended to be universal, sequential, standardized and institutional, guaranteeing a certain measure of continuity (atleast for those who are not excluded from the system).

The borderline between random, nonformal and formal education is not always clear cut. Rather than viewing formal, nonformal and informal education as distinct entities, La Belle (1982) proposed that they should be considered as three different modes of learning. The following Table (La Belle,1982, p. 162) indicates the interrelationships among these modes:

Mode	Characteristics		
	Formal	Nonformal	Informal
Formal	Graded hierarchy schools	Extra-curricular	Peer group
Nonformal	Certificates	Systematic	Participation
		out of school	
Informal	Workplace	Parent instruction	Daily experience

Table 1. The Modes and Characteristics of Education

As is evident from the table, a certain mode of education with particular characteristics may also include characteristics of other modes. In this connection, LaBelle (1982) made further clarifications that in a classroom along with the formal mode represented by the teacher passing on the prescribed curriculum, one could also notice the occurrence of the informal mode represented by the interaction of peers. Likewise, the nonformal characteristics represented by extra curricular activities can be seen in the formal mode while carrying out such activities. In the same way, the nonformal mode demonstrates formal characteristics when participants trained under this mode are awarded certificates. Informal mode, on the other hand, shows formal characteristics when it occurs in the workplace. In other words, characteristics of the different modes of education are not mutually exclusive. Moreover, the figure suggests that there is no strict delineation between these three modes of education. Since learning involves human relationships, which may take different forms due to multiple learning needs and may require the use of different modes of education, the approaches to learning cannot be separated meaningfully. Nonformal education cannot remain uninfluenced by the other modes of education.

While these technical definitions of the various modes of education are heuristically and conceptually speaking, useful differentiators and descriptors, they are the products of a deductive process of thinking that seeks to distill problems and issues to a level that attempts to enhance clarity and imply objectivity but are, arguably, seemingly divorced from a value-laden and more confusing field of application. Inductive thinking broadens and contextualizes these skeletal definitions by placing education (whatever the mode) within the broader nexus of political-economy, society and culture. The nature and role of education, as pointed out in the quote by Grandstaff (1974) introducing this section on

NFE and Rural development, is intimately connected to the espoused vision and practice of the related concept of development.

The Role of Education/NFE in the Modernization Approach to Rural Development. Under the modernization approach to rural development, an approach that is generally ascribed to by international educational planners/experts and the institutions they are affiliated to, education is "a mechanism of adaptation and adjustment" that helps ensure the incremental transition to the modernist vision of development (Kindervatter, 1979; La Belle, 1986).

For instance, educational programs prepare individuals to take their place as economically productive citizens in the existing socio-economic structure. The economic rationale for education is grounded in Theodore Shultz's "Human Capital Theory" (Schultz, 1961). The assumption here is that a worker's skills and abilities are viewed as a form of capital because they are assumed to affect the worker's productivity. Education serves the economy by providing trained and educated human resources with the basic technological capacities and the modern values necessary to complement physical capital effectively. Such capacities are seen to be absent in the Third World and consequently, physical capital is not likely to be utilized effectively for maximizing growth (Harbison, 1973a, 1973b; Myers, 1967) .

Third World countries, convinced that the wealth, power and prosperity of the industrialized countries can be attained by replicating the formal education system of these countries, emphasize or are encouraged to emphasize the formal system of education (based on the western model) as a development priority (D'Aeth, 1975). Formal education, under this scenario, is intended to provide the skills necessary to manage the various aspects of an industrial economy and to facilitate its growth through the adoption and use of more modern technology. It is assumed that since Third World or less developed countries (LDCs) have not been in possession of the technology or the knowledge to initiate, operate, or contribute substantially to the process of industrialization without reliance upon those who possess such attributes, that it is necessary to borrow and adopt these skills and knowledge from the US and Western Europe, where the process is well developed -- education becomes a rationalization for dependence (La Belle, 1986, pp. 78-79). In the final analysis, under the modernization approach to rural development, education is seen to be an investment in human capital for achieving economic and social progress.

However, given the formal system's inability to respond to the "educational" as well as "development" needs of the overwhelming majority of people in the Third World, Coombs et. al. (1973) proposed NFE as a complement and supplement to the formal system of education and as a rural development strategy, when they asked the following question:

> What might be done through nonformal education -- in addition to transforming and strengthening the formal schools -- to help meet the minimum essential learning needs of millions of educationally deprived rural children and adolescents and to help accelerate social and economic development in rural areas ? (p. 2)

According to Coombs (1975), the term "rural" signifies "a lack of modernization characterized by rudimentary farming practices, illiteracy, poverty, ignorance, lack of communication and transportation, poor health and sanitation, unemployment, and subsistence living."

He defines rural development as follows:

> . . . along with increased production and income . . . the equitable distribution of income; increased employment; land reform; better health, nutrition, housing for all rural dwellers; expanded educational opportunities for all; the strengthening of local means of community self-government and cooperation; and the eradication of poverty and the promotion of social justice. (1973, p. 22)

Coombs proposed a "minimum essential learning needs" approach which was to include the following: positive attitudes; functional literacy and numeracy; a scientific outlook; family life knowledge and skills (e.g., health and family planning programs); vocational knowledge and skills; knowledge and skills for civic participation (1973, pp. 13-17). In "Attacking Rural Poverty" (1974), Coombs and Ahmed focus on how NFE can be utilized specifically for improving rural economic productivity and employment possibilities. According to Coombs et al., NFE would help to make rural people better economic producers and agents, scientifically inclined, socially and politically tuned to national democratic citizenship and literate enough to participate in the affairs of modernizing nation states. Discussion of NFE techniques, planning, staffing, evaluation etc. (1973, Ch V; 1975, Ch 10-13) illustrate how NFE can be institutionalized and systematized to fit into the development activities of the modern state apparatus.

Neihoff's (1977) definition of NFE aptly illustrates the role for NFE, under the modernization approach to rural development.

> NFE is essentially a method of defining developmental needs and formulating programs of communication and education to increase the participation of the rural poor in agricultural production and in programs of nutrition, rural health delivery systems, family planning and other programs designed to improve their productivity and welfare, if not survival. (p. 11)

The assimilationist emphasis toward rural (traditional/non-modern) society, one of the assumptions of the model of modernism, is evident when Coombs (1975, p. 5) states that "rural development is a much more complex and long term process involving a fundamental transformation of rural societies -- socially, economically and politically."

UNESCO's advocacy of NFE illustrates a similar approach when they describe "rural development as a comprehensive change encompassing social, economic and cultural spheres involving all segments of society" (UNESCO, 1986, p. 1). A similar report (1980, p. 20) outlines the role of an "education linked to life", stating that such an education,

> should instill scientific method. The question is not so much one of acquiring scientific knowledge as of assimilating a scientific approach and method. Seen in this light, a scientific education teaches the pupil to observe and reason scientifically and objectively, avoiding both a metaphysical interpretation of the facts and a mythification of science and technology. It applies the methods of science to the solution of all problems, and implies the development of a critical and logical attitude to life in all its aspects. A scientific attitude becomes a habit, and the ultimate result is that science becomes one with culture.

The same report, while emphasizing the need for "general education and training" states,

> The rapid development of scientific and technical knowledge, in rural areas as elsewhere, and the increasing need to promote the transformation and industrialization of those areas, mean that the individual is in greater and greater need of a general education which, added to his training, will enable him to adapt himself according to the requirements of his profession and of his life as a whole. (p. 21)

Critics of Schooling and the Evolution of NFE as Popular Education

The critics of schooling generally argue that what is needed is not a "complement or supplement" to formal education but an "alternative". Lyons (1975) is critical of the possible cooptation of NFE by those who would advocate it as a supplement, complement or extension of formal education and the possibility that this advocacy of NFE by members of elites, as a panacea for members of the marginalized masses, will be institutionalized in a similar manner as formal education. The scope for "exploitation" in such state sponsored and institutionalized NFE, he warns, will be abundant.

Berstecher (1985) expresses a similar concern when he recommends that NFE should address existing needs and problems in a given rural context, and must not be linked, directly or indirectly, to serve the needs of the modern urban sector. He states that even a slight deviation in the learning process from rural to urban context may lead the participants out of their reality to a different one in which rural empowerment in social, economic, political and cultural aspects may be overshadowed.

Under a reformist approach to development, the reluctance to ever use the NFE label is best understood in terms of the critique of the dominant modernization approach to development and its prescribed role for formal education/NFE. In this regard, two types of radical critique, (1) that of the "structuralists" (neo-Marxist political-economic-social class focused critiques) and (2) "de-schoolers" (consciousness-culturally based critiques), play an important part in uncovering the dysfunctional aspects of formal education, thereby implicitly pointing out the (3) desired role for alternative education or what some critics, like Paulo Freire, refer to as popular education.

Structuralist critique of formal education. This criticism, primarily neo-Marxist in origin, focuses on the role of schooling in helping to reproduce and perpetuate a hierarchy of power and privilege in society. Schools are seen as instruments of elite domination which foster social inequalities, and instead of promoting social mobility, in the name of equality of opportunity, they reinforce and legitimize inequality. Schools help in promoting a system of class stratification and in reproducing the social division of labor by teaching class related values and attitudes.

Carnoy (1974, p. 3) argues that:

> The imperial power attempted through schooling . . . was to train the colonized for roles that suited the colonizer. Even within the dominant countries themselves, schooling did not affect social inequities. The educational system was no more just or equal than the economy and society itself -- especially -- because schooling was organized to develop and maintain -- an inherently inequitable and unjust organization.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) and Gintis (1976), in their analysis of the structures of schooling and the social structures of production in a capitalist society, like the U.S., argue for a "correspondence principle", or what has also been referred to as the "hidden curriculum" in similar critiques. Bowles and Gintis (1976, p. 54) comment on U.S. capitalism as follows:

> Making U.S. capitalism work involves: ensuring the minimal participation in decision making by the majority (the workers); protecting a single minority (capitalists and managers) against the wills of a majority; and subjecting the majority to the maximal influence of this single unrepresentative minority.

In such an undemocratic structure, few people own and control the bulk of production resources, while most only own their labor, and the actions of the majority of workers (exploited) are controlled by a small minority of owners and managers (exploiters). Furthermore, it is typified by a hierarchical division of labor and bureaucratic authority which, in turn, is often systematically stratified by race, sex, education and social class. This hierarchy exists in every capitalist society.

According to these authors, hierarchy, bureaucracy and social stratification have been used by capitalists, whether in the developed or developing societies, to stabilize the totalitarian system of economic power alluded to. For the security of capitalist profits and the stability of the capitalist division of labor, it is necessary to perpetuate the existing and inequitable social relations of production. Bowles and Gintis (1976, p. 127) maintain that the reproduction of social relations of production depends on the reproduction of consciousness, which is integral to the perpetuation, validation and smooth operation of economic institutions and it is education that functions primarily to reproduce this consciousness in order to support this capitalist economy.

Hence, to produce a labor force, schools are destined not to foster patterns for personal development and social equality, but to legitimize inequality, limit personal development to forms compatible with submission to arbitrary authority and help in the process whereby youths are resigned to their fate. The educational system, therefore, does not add or subtract from the overall degree of inequality and repression originating in the economic sphere, but reproduces and legitimizes this pre-existing pattern.

Considering schools in the light of social relations of economic life, Bowles and Gintis (1976, pp. 131-141) and Gintis (1976) maintain, that the major aspects of the educational organization replicate the relationship of dominance and subordinancy in the economic sphere. The "correspondence" between the social relations of school and work, accounts for the ability of the educational system to produce an amenable and fragmented labor force by habituating students to the discipline of the workplace. The central role of institutional structure is thus summarized in what these authors term as "the correspondence principle", which indicates that the capitalist class will attempt to structure the social organization of schooling so as to make it correspond with the social relations of production. What educators refer to as the "hidden curriculum" is thus, of paramount importance.

It is these critics who argue that NFE lacks what Evans (1981, p. 54) refers to as a "social charter". NFE activities are not usually credentialling processes and their graduates therefore cannot compete effectively with graduates of formal education for jobs. Only formal schools are "chartered" to perform this role. An important aspect of the "charter" granted to schools is its relative independence of the actual knowledge of the graduates. The fact that they have graduated from a given institution is in itself sufficient evidence for society to accept them at a certain level. NFE activities may in fact produce real gains in the ability of their participants, but lacking any sort of societal "charter" these graduates will have weak claims on further education or on employment. Many critics fear that the effect of NFE in this context will be merely to develop a second class system of education which is patronized solely by the disadvantaged sectors of society, who in turn, will remain relatively disadvantaged because of the lack of "charter" of NFE. In short, as pointed out above regarding formal education, NFE will serve to reinforce existing social inequalities rather than to reduce them (Evans, 1981, p. 55).

Apple (1990), Coleman (1966), Goodman (1964), Holt (1972), Jencks (1972), Kozol (1982) and London (1973) are among the several critics of schooling and the formal education system, who contribute to the above structuralist critique. It is for some of these structurally based arguments that Lyons (1975) and Berstecher (1985), both referred to in this section, warn of the danger of institutionalizing NFE in a like manner as the formal system of education. Hamadache (1991) argues that if NFE is to serve the needs of rural people, the disadvantaged and the marginalized, and compensate for such shortcomings and contradictions in the formal education system, its objectives can only be established on an individual basis (dependent on learner and specific context), and it cannot be "centralized", still less institutionalized.

De-schooler's critique of formal education. Primarily concerned with the qualitative aspects of schooling, the molding of consciousness, freedom and liberation, de-schoolers like Freire (1970a, 1973, 1975, 1985, 1987, 1994), Illich (1971), and Reimer (1971) suggest that the educational process needs to be freed from the "education is schooling" model because schools fail to adequately teach "relevant knowledge" (economic utility inclusive); they promote competitiveness and discourage cooperation; they kill desire to learn in children and alienate them from their society; they stifle creativity and development of an inquiring mind and independent thought; they foster conformity; they lead many to equate education with schooling; they foster docility, passivity and submissiveness; they are oppressive, stultifying joyless institutions that crush and indoctrinate the mind of children; they are authoritative and manipulative; they are examination ridden and so on.

Illich (1971) advocated the need to "de-school" society and presented an argument against schools as institutions for development. His writings make clear his opposition to attempts to reform schools, which he advocates replacing completely with learning webs composed of skill-exchanges, peer-matching systems and reference services to educational objects and personnel. He envisions education as part of a new social order which replaces consumption for its own sake with the meaningful interaction of men. For him, education must be a liberating force controlled by the learner and not an institution which subordinates individuals to society.

Freire's (1970a) critique of the teaching-learning process and the student-teacher relationship provides a fundamental illustration of the nature of the deschooler's criticism. Freire (1970a, 1994) conceptualized a radical emancipatory pedagogy as a strategy for combating socio-economic oppression and as a form of liberation from the domesticating nature of the formal system of education. In such domesticating education, the teacher takes charge of the relationship because he/she believes that the purpose of teaching is to communicate a specific amount of subject matter to the students who are looked upon as "empty vessels" waiting to be filled with information. In such a relationship, Freire (1970a, pp. 58-59) stresses that:

> Teaching becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize and repeat. This is the 'banking concept of education'. . . . The teacher chooses and enforces his choice and the students comply. The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher.

Banking education discourages excessive questioning and by being authoritarian in this manner, anaesthetizes and inhibits creative power and attempts to maintain the subversion of consciousness. Above all, given that the formal system is a colonial imposition (or has its roots in historical process of colonization), it follows that authoritarianism by the teacher and the system he/she represents, is a "cultural invasion", always associated with "cultural alienation" and what is referred to as the "culture of silence", as the oppressed submit and strive to adapt to the expected/desired prescription of the oppressor.

Drawing from, both, the structuralist and deschooling arguments, Carmen (1991, p. 72), suggests that the formal schooling approach to education not only fails to provide the opportunities it promises but it also de-stabilizes the culture of the host-participants -- "Transferred western models of culturally non-specific education have resulted in a host of ultimately self-defeating inconsistencies which were not counterbalanced by the 'opportunities' education had promised to provide".

La Belle (1986, p. 7) points out that all these critics have made it evident that the difficulties with the term NFE are not "to be taken lightly as they reflect a host of conceptual, political, cultural, and linguistic issues of importance when working cross-nationally". For instance, some agencies from the Third World do not like the term because it is being promoted as a North American invention and because it reinforces a tradition of Third World borrowing of educational theory and practice, and the dependency that implies. Furthermore, NFE has also been utilized to maintain the "unjust status-quo" in some countries. According to La Belle (1986, p. 5), this was especially the case in Latin America and the Caribbean in the 1970s, as the term often became associated with oppressive governments whose educational campaigns were intended to stifle dissent and maintain inequality. Consequently, there has been a clear rejection of the term in some places, especially in Mexico, Brazil, and Chile, where popular education is a much more common label (La Belle, 1986, p. 7).

According to Carmen (1991, p. 74), what "monopolizing economism and developmentalism like to refer to as NFE is, de facto, Citizen's Education" or education which is initiated by and for people and is also of the people "regardless of and pre-existing any formalised system of education". She states that NFE is a "negative definition", i.e., it is defined in terms of what it is not -- it is not formal education. It is a definition which "automatically marginalizes (or makes invisible) anything which might be occurring independently from, unrelated to and even notwithstanding the Formal System" (1991, p. 72). On an even more critical note, she states:

> More seriously, NFE is a cooptive term. By cooptation, we mean the appropriation by a more powerful and "superior" category. Defining self-initiated, autonomous forms of learning, often surviving on a shoe string, by their relationship to formal education is a perfect example of cooption. In terms of descriptive convenience and conceptual clarity the term NFE is about as useful as defining a lemon as a non-apple. (p. 72)

The Role of NFE as Popular Education in the Reformist Approach to Rural Development. Under the reformist approach to rural development, NFE/Popular education strives to undo these structural and qualitative injustices of the formal education experience and its derived function in a model of development that is based on the modernist vision. As Adiseshiah (cited by Commonwealth Secretariat, 1980, p. 7) states it:

> Nonformal education . . . feeds back into our societies a rather grim and explosive power process by assisting the poor and the down-trodden majority of the people to organize themselves so as to end the state of injustice in which they have been forced to live in.

Or, as Julius Nyerere (1976, p. 10) states it, an education whose role is to empower people by helping them to expand their consciousness and power over themselves, their environments, and societies:

> Education has to increase men's [and women's] physical and mental freedoms -- to increase the control over themselves, their own lives, and the environment in which they live. The ideas imparted by education, or released in the mind through education, should therefore be liberating ideas. The skills acquired by education should be liberating skills. . . . In particular, it has to help men to decide for themselves -- in cooperation -- what development is.

According to Freire (1974, p. 35), the process of development is, "The process in which people, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the socio-historical reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality." However, the knowledge of reality is in dialectical unity with the act of transforming reality and this is what authenticates "education as consciousness-raising" in the service of people's development (Freire, 1994, p. 103). That is, the process of development is primarily an educational process where education focuses on awareness raising and encouraging collective action to transform oppressive realities.

Participation and Rural Development

According to Oakley (1991, p. xii), "In terms of thinking and practice about development, we are currently in the age of 'participation'". As is with the case of the concept of NFE, the concept of participation needs to be understood in terms of a particular approach to rural development. Oakley and Marsden (1984), after reviewing various interpretations of the concept, conclude that participation defies any single attempt at definition or interpretation. They emphasize that there is no one way of looking at it and "its interpretation is very much a function of the analysis employed" (p. 14).

In many ways it could, however, be argued that participation has become an umbrella term for a "supposedly new style of development" (Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 6). Disillusionment with the "modernization approach to rural development" became evident in the mid 1970s and this led to the emergence of "participation" as a major new force in development thinking. Ideas about participation converge in a concern for remedying the "lack of assets, access and voice" that confronts the rural poor (Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 15). Two arguments have engendered a focus on "participation". First, that poverty is structural and has its roots in the economic and political conditions which influence rural people's livelihoods. In order to begin to tackle this poverty, it is important to develop the abilities of rural people to have a say in, and to have some influence on, the forces which control their livelihoods. Second, development programs and projects have largely by-passed the vast majority of rural people; there is a need, therefore to re-think forms of development intervention to ensure that this neglected majority has a chance to benefit from development initiatives (Oakley, 1991, p. 3).

Participation has been a major concern for United Nations agencies such as the ILO, FAO, WHO, UNIFEM, UNRISD, IFAD and UNESCO, which have been conducting research work, disseminating information and training on the subject and conducting projects, since the mid 1970s (Oakley & Marsden, 1984). The work of Anisur Rahman (ILO) and Kamla Bhasin (FAO) exemplifies these efforts. Similarly, research work carried out by universities has been mainly sponsored by these agencies (and other multilateral agencies) and includes the work of the likes of Peter Oakley (University of Reading, UK) and David Marsden (University College, Swansea, UK), J. Cohen and Norman Uphoff (Cornell University, USA) and Koenrad Verhagen (The Institute of Social Studies, Netherlands). Outside the United Nations system, the promotion of participation has become a major plank of the activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in their shift from relief and improvement efforts to the support of efforts to tackle long term problems concerning rural poverty. This NGO concern is illustrated, for example, by the World Council of Churches' Commission on the Church's Participation in Development and the reflections of Reinhild Traitler; the work of the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation and the likes of A. Fuglesang and D. Chandler; and agencies like Oxfam, who have encouraged the practice of people's participation in all its' project activities as a part of the organizational philosophy.

On reviewing the work of most of these agencies, Oakley (1991) concluded that, two broadly different schools of thought had come to the same conclusion in arguing that "participation" was a critical element in tackling the problems of people in the Third World. These two schools of thoughts can be seen to be synonymous with what has been referred to as the "modernization approach to rural development" and the "reformist approach to rural development". The following discussion on the interpretation of the concept of participation will be discussed on the basis of these differing approaches with respect to their treatment of the nature of participation, what some of the obstacles to participation are and why participation is seen to be important.

Participation and the Modernization Approach to Rural Development

The Nature of Participation. Under the modernization approach, participation tends to be viewed as an "input", an "element", a "form of people's contribution" (financial, material, labor, time) that can be "injected into preconceived development projects" as a "means" to achieve the ends of a modernizing state or political-economy (Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Oakley, 1991). That is, participation as a "means" implies the use of participation to achieve some predetermined goal or objective.

> In other words, participation is a way of harnessing the existing physical, economic and social resources (participation as contribution) of rural people in order to achieve the objectives of development programmes and projects. Participation as a means stresses the results of participation in that the achievement of predetermined targets is more important than the act of participation. Often government and development agencies see participation as the means to improving the delivery systems of projects they seek to implement. In these cases participation is essentially a short-term exercise; the local population is mobilised, there is direct involvement in the task at hand but the participation evaporates once the task is completed. In many ways it could be argued that participation as a means is a passive form of participation. (Oakley, 1991, pp. 7-8)

The following statements help to illustrate the notion of participation as "contribution" and as a "means" to get rural people to engage in projects whose ends have been externally determined (Economic Commission for Latin America, Uma Lele and F.A.N. Lisk quoted in Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 19):

> Participation is considered a voluntary contribution by the people to one or another of the public programmes supposed to contribute to national development but the people are not expected to take part in shaping the programme or criticising its content.

> Participation means . . . in its broadest sense, to sensitise people and, thus, to increase the receptivity and ability of rural people to respond to development programmes, as well as to encourage local initiatives.
>
> With regard to rural development . . . participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, in implementing programmes . . . their sharing in the benefits of development programmes, and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programmes.

Under the modernization approach, participation is also viewed as organization and organization is seen to be a fundamental instrument of participation. In fact, few, despite their differing assumptions about rural development, would dispute this contention but where the two approaches to rural development would disagree is on the nature and evolution of the organization (Oakley, 1991). Under the modernization approach, the preference is to encourage externally conceived formal organizations to serve as the vehicles for people's participation in the projects; organizations like co-operatives, farmer's associations, irrigation management committees etc. These organizational imports, while encouraging self-help and community-based initiatives (government attempts to delegate and decentralize decision-making and/or implementation of programs), are expected to complement and/or supplement the existing socio-political and institutional framework and are dependent on their acceptance into this dominant structure.

Phillip Coombs (1981), while discussing the need for participation in NFE programs, illustrates the "participation as contribution and local organization" (within the existing social, economic and political structures) interpretation. He proposed the following concrete indicators of participation and they included: locally provided service, local contributions of money, labor and materials, the strength of self-run local institutions and local advocacy and pressure groups.

Oakley and Marsden (1984, pp. 20-21) conclude the following about the nature of participation under the modernization approach to rural development:

> . . . reflects a form of participation in which the government is the chief protagonist. Indeed, it could be argued that in this form "participation" equals "informing" and that the basic decisions concerning development have already been taken. This school of thought is unable to dissociate "participation" from government responsibility and control.
>
> In its broadest sense this form of "participation" can be equated with mobilisation. Mobilisation is an important dynamic in development practice and reflects both an underlying ideology which argues the need to mobilise the rural sector in order to transform it and make it more "modern" and "responsive" and also the practice of mobilising rural labour for capital formation and in order to relieve scarce government resources. Essentially, therefore, in this form of "participation" the basic decisions which underlie the development process have already been taken and government bureaucracy, in the process of implementation, invites the rural population to endorse and to collaborate with the decisions taken.

Obstacles to Participation. Under a modernization approach to rural development, obstacles and the arguments for participation emphasize concerns/prospects largely related to project efficiency and effectiveness criteria. That is, "To view participation as a means suggests a set of obstacles usually associated with the operational procedures of the task undertaken" (Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 30). For instance, Oakley (1991, p. 14) points out that many planners would argue that there are many potential costs and risks implicit in greater people's participation and these include: (1) project start-up delayed by negotiations with people; (2) increases in staff required to support participation; (3) the possibility, that, when consulted, people might oppose the project; (4) unpredictable participatory methodologies; and (5) over-involvement of less experienced people. In fact, a World Bank study (1988) even suggested that governments might prefer rural people to participate only in project implementation since their involvement in project identification and assessment might give rise to increased expectations.

Other obstacles that are more commonly referred to under this perspective on "participation as a means" include: over-centralized planning, inadequate delivery mechanisms, lack of local co-ordination, inappropriateness of project technology, irrelevant project content, lack of local structures and so on. In fact, it becomes difficult to isolate the obstacles particular to participation as these obstacles refer not only to participation but are the maladies of many rural development projects.

> One could go so far as to say that these obstacles have very little to do with "participation". These obstacles represent the instruments of an approach which packages a product and then invites collaboration and presents this as "participation". (Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 30)

Arguments for Participation. Similarly, arguments in support of participation break down along criteria concerning project efficiency and effectiveness. From an efficiency standpoint, Uphoff (1986, pp. 425-426) suggests why the government might be a "net gainer" from promoting participation, despite the political costs, by pointing out the following:

-- more accurate and representative information about the needs, priorities and capabilities of local people; more reliable feedback on the impact of government initiatives and programs;

-- adaptation of programs to meet local conditions so that scarce resources can be employed more efficiently;

-- lower cost of access to the public for agriculture extension programs, nutrition education, immunization, supervised credit etc., through local organizations and institutions;

-- tapping local technical information and knowledge that can otherwise be costly to obtain or to learn about the fact that rural people have more technical expertise than usually recognized;

-- mobilization of local resources to augment or even substitute for central government resources;

-- improved utilization and maintenance of government facilities and services; and

-- cooperation in new programs, which is more likely to occur when local organizations having the confidence of rural people share responsibility for the innovation.

From an effectiveness standpoint, "participation which allows these people to have a voice in determining objectives, support project administration and make their local knowledge, skills and resources available must result in more effective projects" (Oakley, 1991, p. 17). In the past, a major reason cited for projects not achieving their objectives was the failure to get the local people involved in the process. Such an approach is also seen to improve effectiveness in terms of coverage. While, in the past, delivery services have had contact with only a fraction of the rural poor, "participation" can help to extend coverage and broaden mass appeal by bringing more people within the direct influence of development activities. Furthermore, projects are seen to be more effective in terms of enhanced possibilities for sustainability, after initial level of project support or inputs diminish or are withdrawn. Participation is seen as the antidote to unsustainable projects, in that it is seen to be able to ensure that local people maintain the project's dynamic (Oakley, 1991, p. 18).

Participation and the Reformist Approach to Rural Development

The Nature of Participation. Under a reformist approach to rural development, participation is primarily an "end", a "fundamental dynamic" or a "process" which unfolds over time and whose purpose is to develop and strengthen the capabilities of rural people to intervene more directly in taking charge of their lives. Or, participation is a process of empowerment and a process of organization (Oakley, 1991, p. 9).

> . . . participation is concerned with the distribution of power in society, for it is power which enables groups to determine which needs, and whose needs will be met through the distribution of resources. (D. Curtis quoted in Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 25)

> . . . power is the central theme of participation and . . . participatory social action entails widely shared, collective power by those who are considered beneficiaries. The people become agents of social action and the power differentials between those who control and need resources is reduced through participation. (W. Fernandes and R. Tandon quoted in Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 26)

According to Strauss (1977), no matter how participation is defined, it is in effect a means of reducing power differences -- a redistribution of power between levels in a society, or in organizations or groups, that ought to be conducive to a more realistic implementation of democracy. Having power implies having the ability to control and shape one's (individual and community) process of change.

Participation raises the basic question -- do people really have the power to decide for what, when and how they are going to be involved in the process of change ? Arnstein (1969) developed a typology of participation in this regard, referred to as the "Ladder of Citizen Participation". Her ladder categorizes citizen participation in terms of citizen power and in so doing, focuses on the central issue of the ability to bring about or forestall change.

The ladder's eight rungs are grouped into three generalized grades of participatory power (from the point of view of the citizen). In the grade of least power -- non-participation -- there are two rungs; 1) manipulation and 2) therapy. She describes operations at this level as distortions of participation, illusory, dishonest and arrogant because the ability to control decisions is negligible. Rungs three to five are described as degrees of tokenism and use the terms 3) informing, 4) consultation, and 5) placation. These refer to increased participatory potential but within the parameters determined by the power elite. That is, citizens are allowed to participate upto a point that existing structures may be jeopardized. The remaining three rungs, 6) partnership, 7) delegated power and 8) citizen control refer to increasing levels of revolutionary transformation of the prevailing power base -- citizen power/participation. They involve a redistribution of power.

Participation as a process of empowerment contains three main elements (Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 26): (1) the sharing of power and scarce resources; (2) deliberate efforts by social groups to control their own destinies and improve their living conditions; and (3) opening up opportunities from below. The process generates "countervailing" power to confront the already well-established power configuration within any particular context. According to Oakley and Marsden (1984), this process is also characterized as "creating space", or the imperceptible movement of pushing out the frontiers and of achieving space within which groups might begin to function and to take action. In a more tangible sense, this process is linked to the creation of assets or the building of a minimal economic base for previously excluded groups, in order to help them achieve the means to intervene more powerfully in the change process.

The participatory process of empowerment includes three main elements: (1) the identification and structuring of discrete socio-economic groups as the basic social unit; (2) a process of NFE and consciousness raising (awareness raising); and (3) some form of outside assistance which is instrumental in initiating and accompanying the process of empowering (Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 27). People are empowered when they have greater control over the following criteria identified by Warwick and Kelman (1976) in an ethical analysis of social intervention: (1) the choice of goals to which the change effort is directed; (2) the definition of the target of change (deficient persons or dominating systems ?); (3) the choice of means used to implement the intervention; and (4) the assessment of the consequences of the intervention.

The process of participation as organization differs from the modernist concept of participation as organization given that the reformist approach fundamentally seeks to avoid the introduction of an organizational form from outside but instead, is searching for the conditions under which an authentic form of organization might meaningfully emerge from within the rural poor. That is, the creation of an organization is part of the participatory process, as the rural poor are encouraged to determine the nature and structure of organization. Verhagen (1987) has shown how even formal organizations like co-operatives can emerge as a result of such a participatory process.

Participation as an end is the relentless consequence of the process of empowering and liberation. The objective of the participatory exercise is the achieving of power in order to participate meaningfully in the development process. Oakley and Marsden (1984, p. 28) state the following about conceptualizing participation as an end:

> Participation in the above sense [as an end] is not easy to perceive. The end itself becomes difficult to define in precise terms since it is related to the qualitative processes of achieving power and the resulting ability to take independent action. . . . There is no necessary notion of fixed quantifiable development goals, although these often accompany the process, but the major effort is concentrated upon the empowering process. . . . Because of its unsubstantial nature, it is difficult to characterise and to witness. It essentially occurs over time, and only prolonged observation can help in its understanding. . . . It does not lend itself to the bureaucratic inquiries of administrative frameworks nor, to some extent, to established methods of social research. Yet although the evidence suggests that its practice is becoming widespread, our knowledge of it remains unsystematic.

The objective of participation under a reformist approach is aptly stated by a Latin American NGO, quoted by Oakley and Marsden (1984, p. 28): "The creation of groups able to diagnose and analyze their own problems, to decide upon collective action and to carry out such action to deal with these problems, independent of outside direction".

Obstacles to Participation. As has been pointed out, the obstacles to participation are directly related to the particular rural development approach and its associated perspective on "participation". When participation is seen as a "means", the obstacles concern matters of operational efficiency and effectiveness. However, when participation is viewed as an "end", the obstacles tend to be associated with structural and institutional relationships, at the international, national and local level and their concurrent/subsequent impact on the mind-set, attitudes and behavior of the "rural poor" and the "professional agents of development".

Political, legal and administrative/bureaucratic structures of a country can support or constitute a fundamental obstacle. In countries where the prevailing ideology does not condone citizens' attempts to question and influence governmental decisions that are being "made for them on their behalf", genuine participation will not flourish. Even in political environments where there is a professed "democratic openness" and a willingness to "hear the people", tensions can arise between the policy of the State and development projects which seek to organize rural people in order to influence this policy in terms of a redistribution of political and economic power. Often, these governments try to exert direct political influence on the direction of these development projects or attempt to co-opt such projects for party political reasons (Oakley, 1991).

> Even those governments who talk about people's participation want such participation on their own terms. They specify all the rules of the game, neutralise or co-opt all genuine people's organisations and reduce the concept of participation to a farce. (Bhasin, 1976, p. 28)

Or, as Bopp (1994) points out, governments may use community participation as a means for extracting contributions (financial, material, time and labor) from poor people, to run "government initiatives", thereby avoiding troublesome and expensive governmental responsibilities, like the construction and management of schools.

Bopp (1994, p. 27) also refers to the problem of the "culture of the bureaucracy" versus the "culture of the people from developing countries". "This culture [the former] tends both to be oblivious to indigenous culture, and to absorb indigenous people into itself as if their uniqueness was only food for growth". Or, as Toffler (1980) puts it, the organizational culture of most governments and large donor agencies is distinctly "eurocentric", tending to be hierarchical, hegemonic in its relationship to those it "serves" and oriented to the values of "indust-reality" or the culture system of the industrialized, standardized, centralized, synchronized, massified and bureaucratized nations and peoples of the world.

The legal system often has an inherent bias towards maintaining the status quo. While rural people are often not aware of their legal rights, many legal systems do not overtly seek to impart this information to rural people, who thus remain ignorant and excluded from the effects of laws which could benefit them. Legislation which governs the right of legal associations of different categories of rural workers can also directly constrain participation. According to Oakley (1991), studies conducted by the ILO have highlighted how this right of association has been legally withheld from different groups of rural workers, which thus frustrated their efforts to build organizations to represent their interests.

Centralized governments encourage centralized administrative structures and these structures retain control over decision-making, resource allocation and the information and knowledge which rural people will require if they are to play an effective part in their development. "Administrators in such structures tend to have a negative attitude towards the whole notion of people's participation, which is often manifested as arrogance and a disbelief that rural people can ever assume responsibility for administrative matters" (Oakley, 1991, p. 12). Administrative procedures become an effective deterrent to rural people seeking involvement in or assistance from local administration. People who are struggling for a livelihood cannot spend too much time on persisting for cooperation.

Bopp (1994, p. 28) points out that "one of the most powerful of administrative influences on participatory development has its origins in the structure of aid". That is, external donor agencies tend to organize project relationships with recipient country governments so that centralized project planning and management and rigid timelines are emphasized. According to Korten (1990, xii), "too much money, programmed in blocks that are too large and inflexible, to be used in the opportunistic way required by institutional change initiatives", all tend to frustrate participatory development initiatives emerging at the community level.

International/national economic structures can also serve as a major obstacle to people's participation. The relationship of international economic arrangements and local possibilities has been alluded to in the discussion on Dependency Theory (Bernstein, 1977; Dos Santos, 1974; Frank, 1969) where the international political economy is described in terms of the systematic "development of underdevelopment", as Third World countries have been actively underdeveloped through a process of integration into the world capitalist system as dependent "satellites" to the advanced capitalist nations or "metropoles".

In this scheme, the Third World countries function to export primary commodities and to import finished commodities. The fact that the terms of trade are continually working against the underdeveloped countries means that these countries are increasingly being forced to export more primary commodities in order to be able to maintain a constant level of manufactured imports from the advanced capitalist countries. Third World countries are locked into an international division of labor where they find themselves producing commodities which they are forced to export (cheap primary products) while importing commodities and capital goods (expensive manufactured products) that they are unable to produce. This leads to the extraction of surplus value from the "satellite" to the "metropole", which constitutes the basic structure of underdevelopment. The "debt crisis" is one of the legacies of such "active underdevelopment".

In order to meet its international debt obligations and to finance its import bills, national governments are forced to emphasize exports, often, agricultural cash-crop exports. This means large-scale mechanized farming which has some of the following effects: (1) small farmers are bought out by big farmers (feudal structures are strengthened) or transnational corporations with the money and the technology (Third World dependency is strengthened) and become dependent low-wage earners (low income and no land to meet subsistence needs); (2) import bills go up as imports and servicing of complex machinery and fertilizers, pesticides, and seeds (encouraged in the process of agricultural modernization) add to spiraling costs (cyclical import-export-debt trap); and (3) the weakest rural people are without employment or a living/food as they have been marginalized from their land.

The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) "Structural Adjustment Policies" exemplify the influence of international economic arrangements in matters of local participation, if not the loss of national sovereignty. Third World governments are effectively pressured by the industrialized countries, through the IMF (58 percent of the vote is controlled by these countries, of which the US controls 20 percent), to "liberalize their economies" with the view to meet their debt obligations through a combination of decreased social spending (education, health or infrastructural development -- all policies of redistribution that address power imbalances in the system) and increased foreign currency generation through a devaluation of currency (makes the local export even cheaper for foreign markets), privatization of public enterprise (facilitates transnational ownership of national assets), encouragement of cash-crop agriculture (reduces land for subsistence food requirements of the majority), abolition of price controls (makes goods more inaccessible to the poor) and caps on wages (further reduces the cost of the already abundant supply of labor/reduces labor power)(George, 1988, p. 52; Korner, et. al., 1986). The "development of underdevelopment" thesis allegedly encouraged by such policies, is supported by Bello's analysis of the debt crisis where he concludes, that in terms of the net transfer of financial resources (all flows inclusive -- foreign aid, exports less imports and money market earnings), developing countries have ended up transferring their relatively meager wealth to the already wealthy "developed world" to the tune of $10.2 billion US in 1984 and increasing each year to $43 billion US in 1988.

Attempts to form participatory organizations of the poor who are marginalized by this process of "economic internationalization" are often met with serious resistance by national governments which, in turn, are politically pressured by transnational corporations and their respective governments. Chomsky (1987, 1992) provides a detailed account of how the government of the United States has encouraged "banana republics" or sponsored dictatorships in Latin America and Asia to maintain political control to ensure, among other things, the successful repatriation of profits by US transnational corporations, cheap access to land, labor and raw materials/produce from overseas markets and access to consumer markets for US products. Attempts to form participatory organizations of poor farmers, or attempts to address matters of land re-distribution and ownership have been met with crushing force (Chomsky, 1989, 1992).

> It is a fact that in most countries the dominant relations of power and production and the ideological values legitimising them constitute powerful structural obstacles to the promotion of popular participation. . . . these are the structures and ideologies of "anti-participation" since they help perpetuate grossly unequal access to and control over societal wealth and power. It is argued that the persistence of these "anti-participatory" structures has caused the failure of many local level initiatives to promote participation.
>
> These structural obstacles are fundamental to achieving participation and it is erroneous to think otherwise. The structure disseminates to the regional and local level and pervades all forms of formal and informal institutions and relationships. The structure dictates the terms of participation and reacts oppressively if those terms are redefined; its aim is to keep the rural people in their place, as labour power and possibly as consumers. Participation initiatives emanating from below, therefore, are faced with the dilemma of attempting to flourish within the context of the existing structure or of seeking positively to influence the structure. Much participation field endeavour takes the former course and pushes at the frontiers; others challenge the structure and are correspondingly dealt with. (Oakley & Marsden, 1984, p. 31)

Rural socio-cultural structures can also prove to be obstacles, as Freire (1970a) has demonstrated. Oppressive structures, like those just alluded to, and the corresponding situation of poverty ("marginalization", "dependence" and "oppression") have created and perpetuated a "culture of silence", as the rural poor have no access to, voice or participation in, development. The historical accumulation of pressure and imposed hardship overwhelms some rural people and constrains their willing "participation". An understandable lack of trust in "outsiders" and fear of retaliation by the power elite, inhibit their initiative to seek participation (Oakley, 1991).

According to Bopp (1994, p. 26), a fundamental problem that seriously inhibits participation is that "through the processes of missionization, colonization, schooling and the mass media, people have learned to not believe in themselves, in their own cultural foundations, their own local knowledge, wisdom and beliefs, their own values and technologies, their own history and their own capacity for regeneration and renewal". That is, in exchange for faith in themselves, many people have embraced doubt and dependency. He concludes, "From this standpoint, development is not possible. A people cannot build upon the foundation of who they are not, and what they do not have. The only standpoint from which learning and development is possible is from the foundation of who we actually are, what we do know, and what do we have".

Related to the above suggestion, Bopp (1994) also points out that "dependency" becomes rooted in the "mindset, the habits of thought and action, and the institutional forms" that evolve in the wake of "missionization and colonization". "The expectation that development is something that is delivered to the people like cargo, and that development problems and decisions must be addressed by others such as paid professionals and experts, paralyzes grassroots impulses toward people's participation" (Bopp, 1994, p. 26).

Many rural people are also caught in what Robert Chambers (1983) calls the "deprivation trap" -- lack of the basics that support life, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness -- the struggle for survival often makes the concept of participation unintelligible.

Economic and social differentiation and internal power struggles among the poor also provide obstacles to participation as organization, as people may share their poverty but many other factors can divide them and breed mutual distrust -- a psychology that is often utilized by those groups obstructing participatory process, such as feudal lords and local money lenders (Burkey, 1993; Chambers, 1983; Oakley, 1991). For instance, "For most women in the Third World, the male-dominated culture and society in which they live are the most formidable obstacles that they face in efforts to be included in development activities" (Oakley, 1991, p. 14).

The professional agents of development, or the personnel of NGOs and/or the vocal contingent of activists from many sectors (eg. women, environment, indigenous people's movements etc.), sometimes tend to make "an icon out of participation", reducing their roles to "technical bell-hops" whose only function is to "respond to whatever the people or the community wants or asks" (Bopp, 1994, p. 28). Self-reflection and critique and failure to engage in a more "facilitative role" that suggests "mutual learning" is part of the rhetoric but is often absent from practice. Correspondingly, Bopp (1994) argues that these professionals also engage in a myriad of dysfunctional behaviors, attitudes and relational approaches (because they are seen to obstruct people's participation by promoting the "culture of silence"), that are not just characteristic of government personnel. Some of these attitudes and behaviors include: the communication of an obvious disbelief in the capacity of the people; failing to build on what people know; failing to be honest in disclosing the real agenda, goals and intentions; failure to respect local culture, customs, protocol and knowledge base; reacting negatively to criticism etc. (Bopp, 1994, p. 29).

Arguments for Participation. These arguments, predictably, focus on reforming the unjust structures (economic, political, social, cultural/educational) of domination, oppression and marginalization and the corresponding need for a changing consciousness on the part of the poor, their oppressors and their "helpers". Participation as an "end" is justified in terms of an ethical and moral position that argues for the need for society to be more "democratic" in that power (economic, political, cultural and social) is dispersed and/or used for the betterment of those that have been persecuted by virtue of an induced and/or self-perpetuating state of powerlessness. Until such time, participation is something that needs to be fought for. Participation as organization and empowerment will enable the rural poor to provide a "countervailing force to those elite groups who inevitably dominate development resources and activities. People's participation . . . is a necessary counteracting force which should atleast halt, if not seek to reverse, this position" (Oakley, 1991, p. 16).

Furthermore, under the reformist approach to rural development, participation is not just a more "ethical approach" but is also seen to be an "effective" approach to development, given that a development process shaped by people's values is based on changes that they can accept -- people's "existence rationality" is taken into consideration, as their ability to understand and integrate the change in the context of their present values is not pressured to a point of destruction or confusion (Goulet, 1971). Consequently, the change process is more likely to be meaningful and sustainable.

Rural Development, NFE and Participation: A Conceptual Summary

The preceding analysis introduced the concept of NFE and participation in terms of their contextual relationship to the theory/concept of rural development. The analysis was developed along the lines of two different approaches to rural development, the dominant modernization approach and the alternative reformist approach, the latter including a wide variety of critical positions on the dominant approach.

Two conceptual frameworks, one suggested by Uphoff (1987b) and the other by Vanek and Bayard (1975), help to summarize the preceding analysis. Uphoff (1987b), referring to the degree of participation exemplified in the people's choice of ends (self-determination) and/or the choice of means (self-management), differentiates between "development" and "envelopment". If people have no choice in determining the "ends" that they live/strive for, then the process is "envelopment" (no self-determination) as opposed to a situation where people can chose their "ends", in which case it is "development" (self-determination). Similarly, having no choice over the "means" (no self-management) implies "paternalism" as opposed to a situation of "populism" (self-management). In a participatory environment, people would have the choice of "means" and "ends", the participatory ideal of "populist development", as opposed to the other extreme of "paternalistic envelopment", where people have choice over neither the "means" nor the "ends". Similarly, there could be "compromise" situations of "paternalistic development" (no choice of means but choice of ends) and "populist envelopment" (choice of means but no choice of ends).

In applying this framework, the modernization approach to rural development could be construed as being "paternalist envelopment" or at its most participatory, "populist envelopment". The "ends" under the modernization approach have been determined as the need to "modernize" the rural populace in order to facilitate integration into the national pursuit of increased economic growth and scientific-technological advancement -- envelopment is at the heart of the approach (participation as a "means" to achieve this end). People may be given some opportunity to participate in choosing the "means" to achieving this "end" -- in which case there could be an element of populism in the approach. But often, even the "means" (participation as contribution/local organization to facilitate the assimilation process) is a matter of "constrained choice" -- paternalism becomes apparent.

The reformist approach, according to the rhetoric, strives to give people their lost "voices" -- a choice over the "means" and the "ends" -- "populist development" (participation as empowerment). However, under the reformist approach, given the imperative mission to organize people (participation as organization), a situation could arise where the people lose control over the desired "means" -- a situation of "paternalist development".

In summary, in terms of the degree of control and power the people have over their change process (their participation), the modernization approach encourages a process of "envelopment" while the reformist approach emphasizes "development". Either approach is capable of resorting to paternalism.

Similarly, Vanek and Bayard (1975) analyze the educational process/system (NFE and Formal) in terms the degree of participation being promoted in an educational effort for rural development and social/individual change. They propose the following contrasting dimensions:(1) education is "formal" or "life" oriented; (2) it is "socializing" or "mobilizing"; and (3) "dominating" or "liberating". "Socializing" education characterizes most traditional forms of education, in which individuals are molded to fit into the economic and political structures of a particular social system; both capitalist and socialist systems have structured education to correspond to their forms of production. "Mobilizing" education, in contrast, enables people to transform their socio-economic environment. Education can also be "dominating", as in the case of system-centered "socializing" education or "liberating", as in the case of education that seeks to uncover such "domination" and thereby "free" the individual.

Under a modernization approach to rural development, education is mainly "formal" (as even NFE is seen as a complement and supplement to formal education -- it is also being planned and organized in a similar fashion as "system-centered education"); education is socializing as it seeks to promote a process of "assimilation" (the "ends" of education are the "ends" of a modernization approach -- the people cannot participate in this regard/envelopment); and education is "dominating" because it strives to teach rural individuals (regardless of their diverse cultures) how to "fit into" the process of national modernization.

Under the reformist approach, education is mainly "life oriented" (people's or popular education as opposed to the "system's education"); it can be mobilizing, if the means are left mainly in the control of the people or else it could be socializing; and it is likely to be liberating, as the focus is clearly on freeing the individual from dependence on a "domesticating" system that seeks assimilation or repudiates different rural cultures.

The conceptual relationship between terms like rural development, NFE and participation should be apparent, if not clearly demarcated. Bopp (1994, p. 25) alludes to this in the following statement on learning, participation and development:

> Participation is the principal dynamic of human learning, and therefore of integral human development . If there is no participation, there is no learning. If there is no participation, there is no development. This is because human beings can only learn, grow and develop by directly interacting with and reflecting upon the world around them. Authentic development (there are many counterfeit processes) can only occur if the volitionary capacity of those who are developing is fully engaged. They must be the active agents, and not the passive recipients of the process. If the will, the thinking and the action of people in developing countries is not driving and directing the process, then what is happening cannot be said to be development.

It would appear that participation is both, the means and the ends of development, while participation itself, is accomplished through a conscious and deliberate process of education and learning.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken with a view to developing a participatory perspective on education and rural change. This perspective was developed from: (a) change agent perspectives on participatory NFE and rural change and (b) pertinent conceptual and theoretical discussions in the literature on "themes" identified by change agents or literature that helped to develop meanings and understandings forwarded by change agents. It was hoped that such a perspective would provide rural change agents, "outsiders", and nonformal/popular educators with a renewed sense of their role in the process of education for rural change.

Developing an identified perspective, i.e., a participatory perspective on education, was viewed by the researcher as an opportunity to engage in an act of conceptual construction/re-construction, based on the experiential understanding and reflection of actors in the field and from conceptual/theoretical literature on participation, NFE and rural development. Consequently, the research task was primarily construed as a search for meaning and interpretation of ideas/concepts/theories with the view to promote understanding in the identified field of social inquiry as opposed to a search for the "facts" or "evidence" to "justify" or refute academic/theoretical constructs. This research could be interpreted as an attempt to "construct" meaning and interpretation around widely held ideas and assumptions (theoretical/academic and experiential/practitioner) concerning participation, NFE and the rural change process, in what is commonly referred to in the literature as the "Third World", the "underdeveloped countries" and/or the "developing countries".

This chapter begins with a discussion of some of the methodological assumptions or theoretical considerations that have helped to guide the research process. The research strategy, which was essentially an analytical case study approach, consisting of two case case studies, is then introduced followed by a description of the research process that was undertaken to build these case studies. This section is followed by a discussion on the data collection process which describes, both, methods and sources of data collection. Data analysis and a brief discussion on trustworthiness issues conclude this chapter on methodology.

Theoretical Considerations

Research Emphasis

Participant's meanings. The interpretive or constructivist (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) approach was identified as the most appropriate method to develop change agent perspectives on participatory NFE, given that interpretivism is primarily concerned with the analysis of people's consciousness of their world (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Consciousness is the process by which one gives meaning and value to the outside world and acts accordingly. One's consciousness is always intentional, directional and structured -- consciousness is always consciousness of something. Social phenomena are therefore intrinsically meaningful. To understand them requires an analysis of the meanings and values of the people involved in these phenomena -- in this case, the meanings and values of change agents (vis-a-vis participatory NFE) involved in NFE initiatives.

The interpretive approach is concerned with "the interpretive understanding of human behavior", and researchers using this perspective attempt to understand, rather than assume they know, the meanings people assign to events, interactions and situations. Interpretivists seek to enter "the conceptual world of their subjects in order to understand how and what meaning they construct around events in their daily lives" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, pp. 31-32). They believe that human beings, through interacting with others, interpret experiences in a variety of ways and that these interpretations constitute their reality.

Process. Interpretive research does not concern itself primarily with amounts, counts and measures of things or outcomes but with (Berg, 1989):

> The what, how, when, and where of a thing -- its essence and ambiance. Qualitative research thus refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. (p. 2)
>
> Qualitative researchers . . . are most interested in how human beings arrange themselves and their settings and . . . make sense of their surroundings . . .. (p. 6)

The strengths of this methodology include "depiction of detail, portrayal of process in the active mode, and attention to the perspectives of those studied" (Firestone, 1987, p. 20). Consequently, the discussed themes and categories emphasize change agent reflections, conceptualizations and descriptions of meaning and process related to NFE, participation and rural change.

Natural setting, researcher as instrument and inductive analysis. Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p. 27) emphasize that the natural setting should be the direct source of data and that the researcher should be the key instrument of data collection, emphasizing inductive analysis, description and the study of people's perceptions and meanings. The following steps in interpretive inquiry described by Owens (1982, p. 7) were used to guide this study: (1) direct contact between the investigator and actors in the situation should be primarily employed as a means of collecting data, (2) emergent strategies should be used to design the study rather than a priori specification, and (3) data categories should be developed from examination of the data themselves after collection.

With respect to data analysis, Owens (1982, p. 6) describes the interpretive understanding of reality in terms of the relationship between the whole and the parts and an emphasis on inductive analysis:

> It is a view that the real world we encounter "out there" is such a dynamic system that all of the "parts" are so interrelated that one part inevitably influences the other parts. To understand the reality of that world requires acceptance of the notion that the parts cannot be separated, bit by bit, for careful examination without distorting the system that one seeks to understand. The parts must be examined as best as possible in the context of the whole.

For instance, any specific problem, such as that of providing for the educational and life needs of rural people in a particular village in a developing country, needs to be understood as a part of a larger whole/totality, such as, the various integrating elements of the superstructure of a capitalist society (technology, scientific rationalism, language, free markets, educational determinism-training, culture). An understanding of this totality must precede an understanding of its elements, since the whole dominates the parts in an all-embracing sense. It could be argued, that then only would it be possible to see that it is this "superstructure" of capitalist society that is the medium through which the consciousness of human beings is controlled and molded to fit the requirements of the social formation as a whole. For instance, capitalist economy prescribes a vocational role for NFE, thereby reducing and restricting the educational purpose and consequently, reducing and restricting the possibilities for the development of individuals being served by this system.

Reality

Realities are subjective and are based on constructions of people's minds, arising from the meanings and interpretations which they ascribe to events and processes. Therefore, "the more individuals one explores, the more realities one encounters" -- multiple realities that are socially constructed (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 239). Nonetheless, Bogdan and Biklen point out that although interpretive researchers may emphasize subjective reality as a means to better understand human behavior, "they do not necessarily deny a reality 'out there'" which exists apart from what human beings may think or believe (1982, p. 32). This "reality out there", however, is also subject to individual interpretation and this is what interpretive researchers strive to interpret. "The qualitative study presents a complex view of the world in which there are limits and opportunities that individuals must take into account and use . . .. These limits and opportunities shape action, but do not determine it . . ." (Firestone, 1987, p. 19).

Causality

While the search, by empirical means, for causality or cause and effect relationships characterizes some research, the interpretivist's approach to causality is through the meanings or explanations of cause which are constructed in the minds of people. In other words, if realities are constructions of people's minds, so too can causality be "a construction less traceable by empirical linkages than by plausible semantic/attributional linkages" (Guba and Lincoln, 1982, p. 242). Interpretivists prefer to think of multiple and interacting factors and conditions, "which feedback and feedforward to shape one another". Action can be understood not as having been caused but as having "emerged from the constant interplay of its shapers, all of which themselves are part of the action . . . shaping and being shaped simultaneously" (p. 242).

Facts, Theories and Values

Guba and Lincoln (1982) acknowledge that values are associated with all aspects of research, including decisions about what to study, the substantive theory chosen to guide the inquiry, the inquirer and the respondents, the research paradigm and methods selected to gather and analyze data, and the interpretations of the findings. Harding (1978, p. 202) argues that "what marks phenomena as social actions rather than as biological, chemical, or astronomical events is that they strive to reach normative standards". According to Max Weber (quoted in Trusted, 1987, p. 143),

> The more 'general' the problem involved, . . . the broader is its cultural *significance*, the less subject it is to a single unambiguous answer on the basis of the data of empirical sciences and the greater the role played by value-ideas (Wertideen) and the ultimate highest personal axioms of belief.

Kaplan (1974, p. 89), in support of Weber's views, states that "Freedom from bias means having an open mind, not an empty one". He argues that values are inevitably involved in the choice of problems and inextricably involved with facts because "values enter into the determination of what constitutes a fact". That is, moral values often become embodied in beliefs about what ought and ought not to be done (ideology) and they are also an influence on what we think is and is not (facts).

Similarly, moral values are part of the criteria that guide our choice of explanatory theory and therefore our choice of what and how we explain "the facts". Our values provide us with at least some of the criteria for accepting (and for rejecting) explanatory theories. For instance, Marxists will give different explanations for inner city riots from those offered by capitalists while the explanation of the popularity of beauty competitions suggested by feminists will differ from that offered by promoters . Even a description, a presentation of the facts of a situation, must be value-laden and an explanation of what is described is bound to reflect the embodied values (Trusted, 1987).

A change in moral emphasis -- in priority among values -- unavoidably demands a new way of sorting out facts and vice versa. For instance, before Karl Marx, poverty was just a personal misfortune, whereas after him, it was part of the oppression of the working classes. The factual and value elements in this change are not logically isolated and one change could not have happened without the other (Trusted, 1987, p. 144).

The connection between facts, theories and values is, conceptually speaking, a deep one. Therefore, we have to be prepared to entertain the notion that there may be different, perhaps complementary, perhaps incompatible descriptions and explanations arising from different values, i.e., a single coherent account of social phenomena is probably neither possible nor desirable (Trusted, 1987, p. 149). Or, as Putnam (1961, p. 139) said,

> it is not a matter for regret that we are human and it is because we are human that we make moral judgements and take moral attitudes about human behavior. We do not take a moral interest in animate objects, hydrocarbons, quasars, metals and so on, nor in the behavior of plants and animals but we not only do, we must, morally evaluate ourselves.

Weber, while acknowledging the pervasive influence of values, was still anxious to preserve the distinction between what he referred to as "existential knowledge" or knowledge of "what is" and normative knowledge, that is, knowledge of "what ought to be". This is because he felt it was easy to unwittingly slide from "is" to "ought" (and vice versa). "Values" are pervasive but they were not to be confused with "facts" and this could only be possible if they (values) were overtly stated. For Weber, "an attitude of moral indifference has no connection with scientific objectivity" (quoted in Trusted, 1987, p. 143).

As far as this research is concerned, thought and theory [defined by Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p. 30), "as a loose collection of logically held-together assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research] are tied to a specific interest in the development of a society without injustice, namely, the related injustices of poverty/deprivation and affluence/excess. That is, rather than profess neutrality, thought and theory openly take sides in the interest of struggling for a better world. As Horkheimer (1972) points out, "It is not just a research hypothesis which shows its value in the ongoing business of men . . . the theory never aims simply at an increase of knowledge as such. Its goal is man's emancipation from slavery" (Giroux, 1983, p. 19). That is, the researcher cannot be satisfied with measuring empirical regularities. Thought and theory become a transformative activity, unself-conscious about explicitly committing itself to the projection of a future that is as yet unfulfilled (normative thinking).

While empirical studies and the needed scrutiny of practice, on the one hand, and theory, on the other, are interrelated, Giroux (1983) points out that they represent a particular alliance and not a unity in which one dissolves into the other. Observation and empiricism do not take the place of reflection and understanding -- "theory is no mere vehicle that becomes superfluous as soon as data are in hand" (Adorno, 1969 quoted in

Giroux, 1983, p. 20). Continuing to emphasize the normative content of theory and the power of theory to stimulate thought and reflection (regardless of empirical validation/invalidation), Adorno (1973) points out that:

> The call for the unity of theory and practice has irresistibly degraded theory to the servant's role, removing the very traits it should have brought to that unity. The visa stamp of practice which we demand of all theory became a censor's place. Yet whereas theory succumbed in the vaunted mixture, practice became nonconceptual, a piece of the politics it was supposed to lead out of; it became the prey of power. (Giroux, 1983, pp. 21-22)

That is, theory needs to include an explicit normative, value-critical position that would continue to aid reflection on empirically generated data (on what 'is') with the view to facilitate evolution towards a projected/desired state of being (what 'ought to be'). As Giroux (1983) expresses it, by reducing "theory to the mistress of experience, empowered only to provide recipes for practice", the real value of thought and theory are denied -- "its ability to establish possibilities for reflexive thought and practice on the part of those who use it" -- in the case of change agents, it becomes invaluable as an instrument of critique and understanding vis-a-vis participation, NFE and rural change.

Consequently, according to Giroux (1983), as a mode of critique and analysis, theorizing is inextricably linked to the context on which it is brought to bear but is never reducible to that context. It has its own distance and purpose, its own element of practice. The crucial element in both the production and use of theorizing is not the structure at which it is aimed, but the human agents who use it to give meaning to their lives.

In order to enhance the "reflexive" potential of the "conceptual construction" being developed in this research endeavor, the practice/experientially-based reflections of change agents were probed further with the help of theoretical (normative/critical and descriptive/explanatory) and conceptual understandings from the literature on participation, NFE and rural development. The latter were included, after the empirical study, in order to continue to build on the meanings imbedded in, or that were related to, the themes and categories generated from the analysis of data provided by change agents.

As Harding (1978, p. 203) points out, in seeking an understanding of the participant's interpretations, it is not sufficient to simply identify, classify and appreciate the actor's expressed values and understandings (the stated emphasis on "participant meanings"). Now the inquirer must critically examine, from the perspective of his/her own moral/political intuitions, the interpretations put forward by the participant. Otherwise, the account is biased in favor of the agent's value-system, providing a too-tolerant, particularistic account which undermines the "reflexive" potential of social inquiry.

Research Strategy

The case study method was employed as the research strategy, "given that the philosophical assumptions underlying this method are those common to interpretive inquiry" (Merriam, 1985, p. 205). Case studies are undertaken in natural settings and seek "holistic interpretation of the phenomenon under study" (p. 7). Case studies usually involve an examination of a "single system", whether it be an individual, a program, a community or a process. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the case study is a "detailed examination of one setting, or one single subject, or one single depository of documents, or one particular event" (p. 58). Furthermore, case studies may be purely descriptive and/or analytical, where the former provides straightforward description concentrating on what has happened or is happening, while the latter concentrates more on the process of how something comes about and why (Shaw, 1978, pp. 4-5).

Two analytical case studies were conducted in India and Nepal. Analytical case studies "are concerned with the stages and developments in a complex process occurring in a complex setting" (Shaw, 1978, p. 4) -- in this case, the complex process of the "what", "why" and "how" of participatory NFE programs. The case studies were built around: (1) the field experiences of particular change agents (those engaged in a particular NFE project or related projects in the same context); (2) particular NFE project initiatives (NFE Health Project and NFE Literacy Project); (3) a particular geographic/communal region (Mohana Block in Orissa, India and the Gorkha district in Nepal); and (4) a particular process, namely, the process of participatory NFE. It should be noted that change agents with similar experiences in other NFE projects conducted in the same context were also included as participants in the case studies. Also, participants were encouraged to discuss similar experiences pertaining to their engagement in other NFE projects. This is because the focal point of these case studies has not been the particular "event or project" or the "geographic/communal region" but on the question of understanding the what, why and how of a particular "process" -- namely, the process of participatory NFE.

The cases were chosen with the help of friends of the researcher, who are currently employed in organizations engaged in rural development activities in the two countries. The Indian case study was chosen with the help of the Regional Representative for Oxfam India Trust in Bhubaneshwar, Orissa, while the Nepalese case study was suggested by a Research Officer at the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal. The researcher corresponded with these two friends, asking them to suggest the names of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who were engaged in NFE programs for rural development -- NGOs with an "espoused" participatory perspective on education and rural development. While several suggestions were made over the mail, a final selection was made only when the researcher reached India and, later, Nepal.

Documents on the respective organizations and their NFE program initiatives were reviewed and discussions with the two contacts and other knowledgeable informants were concluded before the researcher decided to make initial contact with possible research participant organizations. The discriminating criteria included: (1) preferably a NGO or voluntary sector initiative, (2) with an NFE for rural development program focus, (3) with an espoused "participatory philosophy" to rural development and/or education, that was (4) within a "feasible" (for the researcher) geographical area of operation.

While the last three criteria would seem self-evident, the first requires an explanation. According to Oakley (1991), a major issue in the practice of participation, whatever its intrinsic nature and focus, concerns the development agency which works with or supports the process. While there is no clear cut answer as to which agency is "better" at promoting "participation", especially since participation is understood differently, Oakley (1991, p. 271) states: "It is very difficult to avoid the conclusion that in general government-supported projects which supposedly seek to promote people's participation are not successful in developing an authentic base for sustained local involvement." More conclusively, Oakley and Marsden (1984, pp. 80-90) stated that "while NGOs employed a participatory strategy, formalized bureaucracies if anything, resist its implementation" given that some interpretations and practice of participation "inevitably challenge existing bureaucratic structures". They suggested two possible reasons for this, namely, (1) that the government's understanding of participation is generally "limited" and rural development in general and participation in particular are not government prerogatives and (2) that "inflexible, unimaginative and often cumbersome project procedures frustrate many government efforts to develop local participation" (p. 272). Similarly, Rahman (1985, pp. 17-18) states that while "all governments are not monolithic organizations firmly wedded to the principle of 'development from above'", it may be, that "the nature of the work concerned unquestionably makes government agencies typically unsuitable to handle participation on a significant and sustained scale." On the other hand, Oakley (1991, p. 272) also states that "it is difficult to come to the conclusion that NGOs are the best agencies to support a process of participation", especially since there is a "broad church (variety) of NGOs, which makes generalized statements impossible". However, "the strength of NGO projects is their overt support for bottom-up development, which is reflected in their style, their language and their solidarity" (p. 273). In the final analysis, Oakley (1991, p. 272) states that "if we characterize NGO-supported projects as usually more flexible, less constrained by time, more ideologically committed to people's involvement and more willing to experiment, then we could argue that such projects would be more conducive to promoting participation."

Research Process

Gaining Access

India. After meeting several times with the Regional Representative for Oxfam in Bhubaneshwar, the capital of the east coast state of Orissa, the researcher (based on the criteria presented above) decided to pursue a Community Health Project that was a joint initiative between Oxfam and a people's organization, Bapuji Gramya Kalyan Samaj (BGKS). The latter is described as a "people's organization" because the tribals and lower caste people of the Mohana Block in the Ganjam District of the state had formed their own organization for their development process. The Regional Representative for Oxfam had been a willing participant in the process, thus far, and agreed to become more involved with the research. Through the course of examining project documents, two Project Officers from Oxfam, who were responsible for this project and several similar initiatives in the state, volunteered their time and understanding about the project. These discussions and preliminary review of Oxfam documents on the project provided the researcher with useful background on the nature of the venture.

With an introduction from the Regional Representative via telephone, a meeting between the researcher and an Organizer for BGKS was arranged. The researcher then traveled to the BGKS office in Mohana (town), a day's journey by road from Bhubaneshwar. On arriving at Mohana, the Organizer took the researcher to several BGKS villages in the surrounding hillsides of the Eastern Ghats, home to most of the BGKS membership. He spoke incessantly about the people and their struggle and was keen to know about the research. The researcher briefed him as follows: (1) that he was there to discuss the experiences and understandings of people like the Organizer and other change agents who were engaged in a people's organization for development; (2) that he was there to learn from them about their understanding of the development problem(s), the role and process of education in addressing this/these problem(s) and the part that people had to play in the process that was unfolding there, especially with respect to the Community Health Project; and (3) that there was no compulsion or pressure for BGKS to participate because there were other options open to the researcher, even though the BGKS Community Health project was of particular interest to this researcher. The researcher's interest in BGKS was welcomed by the Organizer and other members and the researcher spent the next three weeks here (in accommodation provided by the organization). The Organizer introduced the researcher to several other members of the organization who had specific roles to play in the organization and the Community Health Project. The researcher had ample opportunity, during this period of time, to talk with several members of the organization, individually and in groups. This was valuable in assessing potential and interested research participants and in developing a sense of the context.

After three weeks, the researcher returned to Bhubaneshwar and the next three weeks were spent there with the identified Oxfam staff. The researcher spent almost six weeks in Orissa, developing the case study on the Community Health Project.

Nepal. The researcher then traveled to the capital of Nepal, Kathmandu, to make contact with the Research Officer from the Center for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), Tribhuvan University. A similar process of discussion with this contact and others at the Center took place over a few days. Three potential organizations and respective projects were identified as being of potential interest to the researcher. The Research Officer fixed appointments with the various Education Officer designations in each of these organizations, providing a brief background in terms of the researcher's institutional affiliation and purpose for visiting them.

Over the course of a week, the researcher met with these organizations and requested documentation on the respective projects of interest, informing the prospective participants that this was still part of a process of selection. Finally, a NFE Literacy Project being conducted by SAVE the Children U.S. (SAVE) in the Gorkha district was chosen by the researcher as a prospective participant organization. The Education Program Officer was approached by the researcher for a second meeting during which the purpose and process of the research was presented to him, along similar lines as the suggestion to the Organizer for BGKS. He was more than cooperative and suggested that I meet with the NFE Education Coordinator for the Gorkha district. This person was visiting Kathmandu in a couple of days for a conference and he agreed to arrange for me to meet with him. Meanwhile, he provided the researcher with a brief overview of what was being attempted in Gorkha and also provided pertinent documentation regarding the organization and the particular project.

A four day trip to the Gorkha area was also undertaken, in order to see the villages where the organization was conducting its activities. Otherwise, the researcher spent the entire five weeks of the Nepal visit, in Kathmandu. During this period, other members and researchers from CERID, while assisting the researcher in the process of selection of organizations/projects, also expressed an interest in the focus of the study and began to share experiences about the SAVE initiative and other similar initiatives that they had experienced in Nepal. Two of these people eventually became participants for this study. During this process of discussion with members of CERID, a particular professor/researcher's name was mentioned as a key actor and proponent of participatory education in the terai region (plains) of Nepal. Consequently, with the help of the researcher's contact in CERID, a trip was made to the terai to meet this person as well. He willingly agreed to be a research participant.

Data Collection: Methods and Sources

A number of authors agree that observation, interviewing and document analysis are primary methods of data collection for obtaining case study data (Owens, 1982; Rist, 1982). Semi-structured and/or open-ended interviewing was the major method of data collection in these case studies. Organizational documents were analyzed to establish the context in which the participants were engaged.

Change agent perspectives on participatory NFE were developed with the help of the following related case-study objectives and associated interview questions:

1. To determine change agent perspectives on the *nature* of participatory NFE projects.
    1.1 What is the "development problem" ? Or, what is the rural change process attempting to change ?
    1.2 What is the role of education in addressing this problem ? What kind of an education is necessary ?
    1.3 What does participation have to do with this process of education and rural change ? What does participation mean ?
    1.4 How does "participation" manifest itself ?
    1.5 What is the role of the change agent in participatory NFE projects ? What is the relationship of the change agent to the rural participant ?
2. To determine change agent perspectives regarding the *desirability* of participatory NFE projects.
    2.1 Why should participatory NFE projects be encouraged/discouraged ?
    2.2 What are the problems and/or prospects of such an approach to NFE projects ? Why ?

India

The interviewees/participants in this case study were change agents from Oxfam and BGKS who were engaged in the Community Health Project being run in conjunction by these two organizations. This Health Project was the subject of the first case study . The following points describe some of the pertinent features of the interview process:

-- A total of six people participated as interviewees, three of whom were from Oxfam while the remaining three were from BGKS.

-- Each interviewee was formally interviewed twice, with each session lasting between sixty to ninety minutes.

-- The BGKS interviews were conducted over a three week period at the BGKS community office in Mohana, while the Oxfam interviews were conducted over the following three-week period at the Oxfam office in Bhubaneshwar.

-- All interviews were conducted in English and were tape recorded.

-- The interviews were guided by the objectives and related questions identified above; interviewees were encouraged to illustrate their ideas and positions with practical examples and personal experience; and while the pre-determined open-ended questions guided the interviews, no specific order was rigidly adhered to, as interviewees were given maximum control over defining the discussion in terms of their sense of the concepts of participation, rural education/educational process and rural problems/change process.

-- Prior to the formal interviews, an informal interview session was held with each prospective interviewee where the following happened: (1) interviewees were told that there was no compulsion to participate at any time in the process and that their participation was voluntary and a matter between the researcher and them, with no "employee specific" sanctions/compulsions from the organization; (2) interviewees were briefed on the objectives of the research (and the related questions) and the manner in which their perspectives were to be utilized, with an emphasis on how confidentiality was hoped to be achieved; and (3) they were asked to think on the matter for a day or two and then inform the researcher about their decision to participate or not (it was also suggested that if they had any further questions, the researcher would be available at the following place to answer them).

-- All the participants agreed, without any reservations, to participate; while the tape recorder was handed to them to control, not one participant ever used it to control what was said and taped; none of them specified any limitations on the use of the interview data and generally stated that they relied on the researcher's judgment in presenting the material in an ethical manner; and none of them felt there was a need to hide their identity in any manner (although the researcher has taken the precaution, where statements could be construed to be of a sensitive nature), with the only stipulation that they get to read the finished product.

-- Follow-up discussions were held with all participants for the purpose of clarification, additional comments and insights and validation of researcher interpretations of participant's comments; interview notes during the interviews and after listening to the tapes (this was done after every interview) were useful in this regard and proved valuable for clarification and further probing for development of ideas and concepts.

Finally, documentary data in the way of organizational goals and objectives, baseline surveys on project participants and details concerning the Community Health

Project, were solicited and provided by the offices of both organizations. These were analyzed and included in order to develop the description of the context that research participants were engaged in.

Nepal

The interviewees/participants in this case study were change agents from SAVE the Children U.S. (SAVE), the Center for Educational Research and Innovation (CERID), Tribhuvan University, and a Nepalese Professor/Researcher/Activist from Syracuse University, New York, USA. The following points help to describe some of the pertinent features of this interview process:

-- A total of five people participated as interviewees, two of whom were from SAVE, two from CERID and one individual voluntary activist.

-- Each interviewee was formally interviewed twice, with the exception of the individual activist interview (one two-hour interview), while each session lasted between sixty to ninety minutes.

-- The SAVE and CERID interviews were conducted over a five-week period at the respective offices of the two organizations in Kathmandu, while the individual activist interview was conducted at the participant's residence in Chitwan, a day's journey by road from Kathmandu.

-- Only one interview session with a participant from SAVE was conducted in Hindi -- a language common to India and Nepal -- and was later translated by the researcher. Otherwise, all interviews were conducted in English and were tape recorded.

-- The rest of the interview process followed a similar pattern as has been described above for the Indian case, with the exception of one follow-up discussion concerning the individual activist interview, which was conducted over the phone.

Finally, documentary data regarding SAVE's organizational goals and objectives, baseline surveys on project participants and details concerning the NFE Literacy Project in Gorkha were solicited and analyzed, to develop a description of the context that research participants were engaged in.

All fifteen ninety minute tapes (from both case studies) were transcribed completely for the purposes of data analysis.

Data Analysis

Interview and documentary data were subjected to a content analysis, "a multipurpose research method developed specifically for investigating any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis for inference" (Holtsi, 1969, p. 2). Or, it is the examination by researchers of "artifacts of social communication" which comprise "written documents or transcriptions of recorded verbal communications" (Berg, 1989, p. 106).

Interview data were read and re-read several times in order to establish coding categories for various "bits of ideas" or "units". These "units" were then physically cut and sorted under "broader schemes of categorization" or "subjects". Guetzkow (1950) refers to this process of "unitizing" and "subject categorization" as "coding". Skrtic's (1985, p. 195) description makes this process more transparent:

> Essentially, the categorization process involves sorting the unit cards into groupings of like content and devising a rule to describe the nature of the content to be included in each one. That is, the tacit knowledge we used to judge the units as look-alikes was translated into the propositional language of a rule for classification. As the categorization process continued, a number of units could be placed in more than one category. This is because they contained content that was related logically to the content of established categories.

Units that belonged in more than one subject category were numbered or cross-referenced accordingly. Up until this representation, the concern was with the "manifest content or surface meanings of those elements of the data that were physically present and countable" -- a concern for a more objective representation of participant's meanings is attempted, with little heed to inferences about and interpretations of motives, values, intentions, meanings and symbols (Berg, 1989, p. 107).

However, as Powney and Watts (1987, pp. 160-161) put it, "Data analysis must be something more than the direct description of the data -- a creative, constructive affair that is not simply an act of isolating and describing something that might be considered self-evident . . . . Analysis is a reconstructive and not a reproductive process." Consequently, subject categories were then further grouped and amalgamated under plausible "thematic schemes". This kind of interpretation culminated in the analytical section on what has been referred to as "Emergent Themes". The subsequent, brief, section concerning "Reflections on Emergent Themes", then explores deeper or latent meanings. The researcher takes greater latitude for "reading between the lines", so to speak; his/her "collective/holistic sense" of the research experience is used to draw meaningful conclusions from the data (Berg, 1989, p. 338; Holtsi, 1969, pp. 12-13).

Analytical Review Of The Literature

After the completion of this analysis, theoretical and conceptually based literature pertaining to (1) NFE and rural development, (2) participation and rural development and (3) international development/rural development was analytically reviewed and then utilized to probe and build on the presented participant/change agent perspectives on participatory NFE for rural change -- an assumptional analysis of the "meanings" presented by change agents. The previously analyzed change agent perspectives (prior to this review of the literature) provided the parameters for delimiting the relevant literature that was identified from ERIC and UNESCO data bases, from International Development Abstracts (sections on Education and Training/Poverty and Welfare/NGOs and People's Participation/Development Theory and Concepts/Culture and Society), the Social Science Index and the International Development Index. Literature in the form of books, journals and research reports was explored; the proper sources were selected based on frequently quoted authors, recent publications, and landmark literature; and this was integrated, synthesized (Merriam & Simpson, 1984, p. 138) and presented in a manner that helped to achieve the stated objective of further probing and building on the preceding perspectives of the change agent research participants.

Research Trustworthiness

Particular projects (health or literacy) and regions (in Nepal and India) were encouraged, as far as possible, to ensure contextual relevance of the insights and experiences provided by participants pertaining to the participatory NFE process and in order to enhance the transferability of the emergent themes and their implications for participatory NFE in other contexts.

The credibility of the findings and interpretations in this study or the extent to which these findings and interpretations were seen as credible by participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296), was facilitated by member checks, where participants attested the validity of the themes that the researcher had derived from the data that they had provided. In this regard, interview data and a preliminary analysis resulting in "emergent themes" was sent back to participants for their feedback and review.

Dependability or the requirement that "the work of one evaluator (or team) can be tested for consistency by a second evaluator or team which, after examining the work of the first, can conclude, "Yes, given that perspective and those data, I would probably have reached the same conclusion" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 124) was ensured with the help of peer debriefing, as the perspectives, data and analysis were shared with experienced and knowledgeable peers in the faculty of education (two of whom were from Nepal) working and studying in the area of education and rural development. An assessment of pertinent themes in the literature on rural development, participation and NFE also served as an indicator of dependability. The extensive use of participant's words (quotations) in the presented and analyzed data should also help to improve the dependability of the research.

Confirmability or the extent to which the data used in the study can be confirmed from other sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 300) was ensured through the use of multiple methods of data collection and sources of data (triangulation). Documents, interviews, the literature on the subject of inquiry case studies from different contexts concerning different organizations and project focuses and participants with differing backgrounds and organizational positions and roles are some examples of the use of triangulation to help ensure confirmability. Member checks aided confirmability of the primary data collected for the study. Furthermore, data could be considered confirmed as other people, in similar positions to the participants, recognized the researcher's interpretations of the participant's perceptions, experiences and understandings.

CHAPTER 4

A NFE LITERACY PROJECT: SAVE THE CHILDREN (U.S.) IN NEPAL

Context: Nonformal Education Literacy Program

The Country: Nepal

Geography. Sheltered at the foothills of the Himalayas, sandwiched between India to the south and Tibet to the north, Nepal is a country that is some 500 miles long and 100-150 miles wide and rectangular in shape. On the basis of altitude, this country is divided into three natural regions: (1) The Himalayan Region, (2) The Mountain Region, and (3) The Terai Region.

The Himalayan Region covers 15 percent of the total land area of the country and is some 4877m above sea level, with eight peaks exceeding the height of 8000m, including Mt. Everest, at 8848m. The Mountain Region, which is also known as the Mid-Himalaya or the Hilly Region, covers 68 percent of the total land area, of which 33 percent comprises cultivable land. The Terai Region, occupying 17 percent of the total land area, has the most fertile land and is called the granary of Nepal. This region is generally hotter than the other two regions, with summer temperatures around 40-42 degrees centigrade and winter temperatures of 10-15 degrees. This region also abounds in forests which are now fast disappearing because of human encroachment for habitation and the felling of trees for export, building materials and fuel (Shrestha & Singh, 1992).

According to the 1991 Census report, Nepal has a population of 19.37 million people, or a population density of 131.61 people per square kilometer, with a population growth rate of 2.46 percent. Males and females are evenly divided. According to the 1981 Census Report, 8.7 percent lived in the Mountain Region, 47.7 percent in the Hilly Region and 43.6 percent in the Terai.

Economy, politics and administration. Nepal is predominantly an agricultural country with more than 90 percent of the total population depending on agriculture for their livelihood. As such, 80 percent of the industries are based on agriculture and its products and 60 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP) is derived from agriculture (Shrestha & Singh, 1992, p. 1). With its natural mountainous beauty, tourism is the other major earner of foreign currency. With a per capita income of $160 US, 10 percent of the GNP is in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA) (1987 figures) as multilateral and bilateral grants and loans (UNICEF, 1990, p. 86), and Nepal is dependent on neighboring India for energy requirements, other imports and as an export market. Nepal has a conspicuous trade deficit with India and the rest of the world (Shrestha & Singh, 1992, p. 158).

According to the country's Eighth Five Year Plan (1992/93-1996/97), the main purpose of the plan is to give the country "a definite direction towards the socio-economic upliftment of its citizens by tackling the problems of economic stagnation and poverty, structural distortions, environmental degradation and rapid population growth" (Shrestha & Singh, 1992, p. 5). The Plan aims to raise the economic growth rate from 3 percent to 5 percent and employment by 3 percent. According to UNICEF (1990, p. 86), over the period 1977-87, 55 percent of the urban population and 61 percent of the rural population lived below the "absolute poverty level".

Nepal has currently been undergoing changes in its political system and as of May 1991, a democratically elected government is governing the country, while the king's power has been curtailed by relegating him to the role of constitutional monarch. Historically, since the mid 19th century, the country was governed by an autocracy of the Rana family, de facto rulers who had allegedly undermined the power of the monarch. A century later, a united opposition by the king and different political parties, resulted in the Ranas being deposed in 1951. However, it was not until February of 1959 that the then king Mahendra, agreed to hold a democratic election, which saw a landslide victory for the Congress party. However, two years later, under charges of corruption and failure to maintain law and order in the country, the parliament was dissolved and all political parties were banned by the king. The king became the head of state and the government. He instituted a new constitution and a Partyless Panchayat System in the country -- a four tier political-administrative structure at the level of the village or town, district, zone and the nation (Shrestha & Singh, 1992, pp. 2-4).

After thirty years of the Panchayat System, a functional unity was forged between the Nepali Congress and seven Communist parties, who then opposed the Panchayat government as a united front. An agreement was reached between the king and the united front and an interim government was formed. This government was to draft a constitution and hold democratic elections. On the basis of this new constitution, an election was held on May 12th, 1991 which resulted in the Congress winning 110 of 205 seats while the Marxist-Leninists secured 68 seats in the House of Representatives (Shrestha & Singh, 1992, p. 3).

For administrative purposes, the country is currently divided into development regions (5), zones (14), districts (75), Ilakas (9/district), Village or Town Development Committees (VDCs) or Panchayats (7-10/Ilaka), and wards (9/VDC).

Culture and religion. Nepal is a country with tremendous diversity in language, customs, ethnic grouping and religious practice. In geographical terms, the Upper Himalayas have been the main homeland of the Bhotias. Their language and culture are influenced by the neighboring Tibetans. They speak mostly Tibetan and Thaksi. Newars, Tamangs, Sunwars, Kirantis, Limboos and Rais are found mostly in the eastern part of the Lower Himalayas while the western part is mostly inhabited by Newars, Gurungs, Magars, Ranas, Thakuris, Gorkhalis, Dotyals, Jumlis etc. The Newars form the bulk of the population in the Kathmandu valley. Languages spoken by the various groups include Newari, Tamang, Rai, Kiranti, Gurung, Magar, Dotyal, Jumli and Humli while Nepali is usually the language spoken between different groups. The Inner Terai is mostly inhabited by Majhis and Danuwars while the forest belt has been mainly occupied by the Tharus. The people of the Terai speak Maithlee, Bhojpuri, Rajbansi, Tharu and Hindi is widely spoken and understood as a unifying language in the Terai (borders India). According to the 1981 Census Report, there are atleast 18 different mother tongues, with 58 percent of the population speaking Nepali, followed by 11 percent speaking Maithili.

The constitution of 1990 declared Nepal a Hindu state, with 90 percent of the population being of the Hindu persuasion, followed by 5.3 percent, Buddhists. While the constitution has banned such practices through the Muluki Ain civil code (the law of the land), promulgated in 1963, polyandry, the caste system and animism are prevalent, especially among people from the Hilly regions (Shrestha & Singh, 1992, p. 9).

Health and education. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) classification scheme of the "under five mortality rate" (U5MR), Nepal places 18th in the "Very High U5MR" classification of "over 170/1000 live births" (UNICEF, 1990, p. 76). With a U5MR of 197 in 1988, life expectancy at birth is 51 years. Figures over the period 1985-87 suggest that only 29 percent of the population have access to safe water, of which, 70 percent of urban people have access while only 25 percent of rural people have such access (p. 80). Keeping in mind a total population of 19.37 million people, in 1989/90 there were 123 hospitals with 4717 hospital beds and 951 doctors, surgeons and homeopaths in the country (Shrestha & Singh, 1992, p. 157). Indigenous medicinal practice is also prevalent and is reflected in the 370 Vaidyas (doctors), 153 Ayurvedic centers and the use of mid-wives for the provision of several health services. Primary health care is carried out through 816 health posts and 16 health centers (p. 157).

According to UNICEF (1990, p. 82), the adult literacy rate in Nepal, for 1985, was 39 percent for males and 12 percent for females. The net primary school enrollment ratio of male to female enrollment for the period 1986-88 was 76/35. 28 percent of those enrolled for grade I complete primary school. The gross secondary school enrollment ratio for the period 1986-88 for male to female enrollment was 35/11 (p. 82).

The Organization: Save The Children U.S. (SAVE)

Development strategy. Save the Children U.S. (SAVE) is a Boston (USA) based non-governmental organization (NGO) or an international non-governmental organization (INGO -- from a Nepalese perspective), that first began rural development work in Nepal in 1981, in the Deurali panchayat of the Gorkha district. SAVE seeks to ". . . identify and implement activities which have direct benefits for children through the development of their communities" and ". . . in the long run hopes to develop a sustainable community development program through raising the consciousness and participation of the local people by involving them in all stages of program development" (SAVE, 1989, p. 1).

The development strategy employed by SAVE, since 1981, has been referred to as the C-BIRD program or the Community-Based Integrated Rural Development program. This program was designed to establish a panchayat-level institution for carrying out an integrated system of development activities, i.e., the C-BIRD methodology tries to ". . . create an atmosphere to enhance and expand panchayat-level community cooperation and self-reliance" (SAVE, 1989, p. 1).

The Impact Study Report for Deurali panchayat (SAVE, 1989, pp. 1-2) had this to say about the role of program participants:

> The C-BIRD methodology requires the involvement of the community members in their own process of development. . . . In most cases, planning, prioritization and implementation of these integrated programs has been done by first establishing a Village Development Committee (VDC) and Ward Level Sub-Committees (WSC). These committees are selected by community members and are the chosen representatives of the impact area. In each specific project to be planned and implemented, SAVE prefers the active participation from the villagers. In this regard, the VDC and WSCs play a critical part in identifying the prioritized problems, assessing local needs, analyzing resources, planning according to the availability of resources, implementing the prioritized projects, and monitoring their success.

In practice, the C-BIRD methodology emphasized: (1) developing local leadership, (2) transferring skills to community people, (3) assisting in establishing viable local organizations, (4) mobilizing local resources, (5) assisting communities to expand their finances; and (6) promoting linkages with other institutions.

As of fiscal year 1992, there has been a major shift in terms of the point of intervention and the scope of such intervention. According to the Annual Report for 1991-92, there has been "A major revision of the SAVE strategy for working in Nepal with the start of FY92" (p. 1). An "alternative methodology for intervention" had been tested in Ilaka 1 of the Gorkha district in 1990, where the strategy emphasized ". . . working with whole Ilakas rather than VDCs. In this manner the agency began to identify its beneficiary population by Ilakas, rather than VDCs. So, for instance, whereas the agency had been working in two VDCs of Ilaka 1 with a total population of 5,000 people in each VDC, once we began promoting at the Ilaka level, we were starting with a beneficiary population of 35,000 in all of Ilaka 1" (SAVE, 1992, p. 1).

The report continues to note the "immediate positive impacts on our program" as being: (1) SAVE was seen by His Majesty's Government as willing to take on greater responsibility in the country; (2) the agency was able to coordinate its staff and resources much more closely with district-level government staff and services; (3) the agency was no longer beholden to vested interests at the VDC level in each community; and (4) the agency was able to strategically review and reorganize its community development methodology in order to strengthen user groups at the grassroots level, especially women's groups formed from NFE classes.

Project sectors, projects, donors and cooperating organizations. Project sectors included education (formal and nonformal education), health, sustainable agriculture and natural resource management, productivity (leadership & organization building and income generation) and infrastructure development. Also included as a project sector or functional activity is what is referred to as institutional development or providing support to and linking with other NGOs and INGOs (SAVE, 1992).

Under the C-BIRD strategy, a typical set of integrated project objectives (this example applies to the Deurali Project) would be as follows (SAVE, 1989, p. 4): (1) improving the food supply situation, (2) providing clean and safe drinking water, (3) increasing the literacy rate and improving the quality of education, (4) improving the health status of the community, (5) developing local-level institutions to carry out the development activities, (6) developing leadership skills within the community, (7) providing additional irrigation facilities to increase agricultural productivity, and (8) increasing the total vegetative cover and reducing erosion.

Some common sources of funding for projects in these various project sectors and the specific types of projects undertaken, along with sponsoring and cooperating agencies, were as follows (SAVE, 1992, pp. 2-3):

-- Social Marketing Child Survival 3, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Gorkha, 1987-92;

-- Phaseover Management, USAID, Gorkha, 1988-92;

-- Siraha Integrated Development, USAID, Siraha, 1990-94;

-- Child Survival 7, USAID, Siraha, 1991-94;

-- Children's Scholarship Endowment, USAID, national, 1991-94.

The Scholarship project is being implemented in the fourteen district chapters of the Nepal National Social Welfare Association (NNSWA), under the guidance of an Advisory Board constituted of members from the Ministry of Education, USAID, NNSWA, SAVE and two other representatives from another social service organization.

For FY92, SAVE is also in the final stages of a discussion with the Netherlands government to fund a four year, one million dollar, "Irrigation Management for Economic Development" project for Gorkha and Siraha districts. In addition, SAVE has submitted a proposal to USAID for a three year Child Survival 8 grant for Nuwakot district -- a proposal that would target primarily Tamang communities in the remote areas of the district. SAVE would attempt to coordinate programs with, both, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education at the district level, in order to improve the health and education standards of these disadvantaged communities (SAVE, 1992, pp. 3-4).

Finally, in terms of the types of project activity being undertaken, the Annual Report for 1991-92 states that ". . . in the recent past, construction projects have been de-emphasized" (p. 32). According to the Program Education Officer, this is being done with the attempt to focus development activities on education and awareness raising and leadership and organization building, in order to encourage self-initiative and project sustainability.

The NFE Literacy Program in the Gorkha District

As has been repeated, SAVE's first project in Nepal, back in 1981, was initiated in the Gorkha district. As part of its integrated development strategy, educational programs were to not only improve literacy standards but were supposed to provide the point of contact with the people through which organization building, leadership and "functional projects" (income generation, health, natural resource management etc.) in other "project sectors" could be stimulated. According to the Impact Study (SAVE, 1990, p. 20), "The basic concept was that by entering the village panchayat with NFE classes, people, especially women, would become aware of different development activities through curricula used in these NFE classes. Such awareness, it was hoped, would result in better participation in the different community projects and better integration into the community for individual projects." The educational (formal and nonformal strategies) objectives for the Deurali Panchayat in the Gorkha district were as follows (SAVE, 1989, p. 6):

-- to increase the panchayat literacy rate;
-- to raise the functional literacy rate;
-- to develop functional skills within the communities;
-- to channel women into functional activities;

-- to ensure high enrollment of needy and deserving students in the local schools;

-- to improve the educational status of the community;

-- to raise awareness in these communities in order to identify their problems, assess their needs, plan, implement and maintain community development projects.

The role of education in the development process is summed up as follows (SAVE, 1990):

> Education is an important variable that significantly relates to the successful implementation of development activities. Its primary role in implementing development activities is to facilitate decisions about adopting new concepts, technologies, and patterns of work, and to introduce these within the existing socio-economic setting of the community. (p. 10)
>
> In some localities, like Taranagar, the level of education is extremely low. This will limit likelihood of these communities adopting new concepts, technologies, or patterns of work for development activities. These more backward areas require more concentrated motivational activities and nonformal education centers for any development measures to be effective. (p. 20)

The Gorkha district and the NFE literacy program participants. As pointed out previously, for administrative purposes, Nepal is divided into five development regions which in turn are divided into two to three zones each, which are further divided into districts. Districts are divided into nine regional units called Ilakas, which are further divided into Panchayats. Gorkha is one such district and Ilaka No.1 of this district consists of the seven panchayats, of which Deurali is one such panchayat. This is where SAVE launched its first C-BIRD project, in which the NFE literacy component played a significant part. The Educational Program Officer and the NFE Coordinator of SAVE, both participants in this research, based their reflections on this particular project experience.

Gorkha, Ilaka No.1 is located within the lower mountain area where the landscape is marked by elevated hills and lower slopes. Covering an area of about 129 sq. km., the elevation varies roughly from 488 to 1800 meters. This is a sub-tropical zone where temperatures vary between 14 and 25 degrees centigrade while 90 percent of annual rainfall occurs during the monsoons (Aryal et al., 1982, p. 417). The terrain is characterized by steep slopes which rise from the Daraudi river. The total land area is divided into cultivated land, forest/bush (40 percent of district), pasture, unused rocky hill, usable marginal lands, settlement area, rivers and others. The primary occupation of the people is subsistence farming. Terrace cultivation is predominant with rice, maize, millet, wheat and potato as the most frequently grown agricultural crops. Many types of toxic and medicinal herbs and fruit trees are also found in the forest and crop lands.

According to a Baseline Survey conducted by SAVE (1990), the forests have been degraded through increasing human encroachment and while considerable area was reforested under the Resource Conservation and Utilization Project (RCUP), the forest situation has not improved.

The total population of Ilaka No.1 is 35,834 people with an even breakdown of males and females and a population density of 278 persons per sq. km. This high density implies an added pressure in terms of land use. Thirty seven percent of the population is below the age of 14 while 36 percent are between the ages of 15 and 35 years. Almost 51 percent of the population is unmarried while 45 percent is married (SAVE, 1990, p. 6).

The major ethnic groups present in the Ilaka include Chetris (26.6 percent), Brahman (17 percent), Magar (14.8 percent) and Newar (12 percent). Other groups in the area include the Sarki, Kumal, Kami, Damai and Gurung among several others (SAVE, 1990, p. 9). Chhetris are from the warrior or ruling class or some trace their ancestry to their Brahman progenitors (priestly class and men of the books). Brahmans, who claim to be of Aryan heritage, are said to have migrated from India to Nepal and by birth are supposed to be priests or preceptors but this is not strictly adhered to these days. The Newars, on the other hand, are the indigenous people of Nepal and, in terms of physical features, are primarily Mongoloid looking. Engaged largely in trade and commerce, generally speaking, they are divided into two sects -- Hindu and Buddhist, each with its own priests, while both have their specific caste and subcaste hierarchies. The Magars, on the other hand, are mainly Buddhist, with a strong Tibetan cultural influence and are primarily craftsman. They are divided into six clans (Shrestha & Singh, 1992).

According to the Baseline Survey conducted by SAVE (1990, p. 10), the area is well served by educational institutions -- 14 primary schools, 9 lower secondary schools, four high schools and two campuses. Through the NFE program and other programs like the scholarship program, SAVE is encouraging the eligible population for school enrollment (between 5-20 years), which numbers approximately 1600 people, to take up formal schooling. 70 percent of this group is currently enrolled in these schools.

The literacy rates are higher than the national average and are at 42 percent, with 60 percent of males being classified as literate and 23 percent of females. However, only 5 percent of the people surveyed make it past the lower secondary level, while female literacy is still very low. Furthermore, according to the distribution of literacy by age, the literate population falls mainly within the age group of 10-24 years. Only 30 percent of the population over the age of 35 years is considered to be literate and this group is over a third of the total population in the Ilaka. Ethnically speaking, literacy rates for Brahmans, Chetris and Newars is more encouraging as opposed to that of the "occupational castes" like the Kami, Damai, and Sarki. While the percentage of literate people among the former group varies between 46-60 percent, the same percentage varies between 12-24 percent for the latter group

The Change Agents: Research Participants

The Education Program Officer and the Nonformal Education Coordinator were the two research participants and interviewees from SAVE. The Education Program Officer was responsible for planning, coordinating, and evaluating all the educational activities and projects for SAVE. His responsibilities included conducting training sessions at the field offices for trainers, who were then responsible for training the village-based facilitators. He has held this position for some five years now and prior to this was with the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The Nonformal Education Coordinator, meanwhile, was a trainer who coordinated the training sessions for village-based facilitators in six VDCs in the Gorkha district, Ilaka number six, with a population of about 3000 people. Having secured a B.Ed. and taught in a high school for seven years, he also trained teachers in the Adult and Literacy project for the government of Nepal and the Ministry of Education and Culture. He started in his position of NFE Coordinator for the Literacy and Post-literacy project for SAVE in October of 1992.

Other research participants included two researchers from the Center for Educational Research and Innovation (CERID), Tribhuvan University, both of whom have had over a decade of experience with several NFE projects that have been implemented in the country and who are aware of SAVE's activities in Gorkha and the country in general. One of these participants has a doctorate in education; the other is currently engaged in his doctoral studies. Both researchers have engaged in and coordinated field based NFE projects for the Center. One of these participants was recently responsible for evaluating women's participation in NFE projects across the country.

A fifth research participant and interviewee was engaged in voluntary action (NFE literacy project with related focuses) with a group of Tharu people from the terai, more specifically, a women's literacy initiative. He has also been responsible for the establishment of the Society for Participatory and Cultural Education (SPACE) and is still an active advisor to this organization. SPACE is engaged in NFE community literacy projects with additional focuses on community health and income generation, in the Lalitpur district. He is a researcher and professor at Syracuse university but, as a Nepali, also maintains a home and does work in Guujanagar, Chitwan with the people in his community.

All the participants were male and were in the age group of forty to fifty years of age.

Change Agent Perspectives on Participation in NFE Programs: Emergent Themes

Change agents engaged in initiating NFE literacy programs for SAVE viewed participation as a means for achieving ends pertaining to literacy achievement and the literacy-related programmatic goals pertaining to institutional development, economic and productivity development, health and agricultural productivity improvements. Consequently, they spoke of participation in terms of participation in NFE programs.

That is, in order to stimulate more people to get involved in the designed program, continue to remain involved and then sustain the program after the change agents had withdrawn, "participation" in certain elements of program planning, pedagogical process and curriculum development processes was seen to be essential .

Data analysis suggests the following related thematic areas that assist reflection on the nature and desirability of participation in NFE: (1) Changing Rural Individuals and Communities: Encouraging Participation in NFE Literacy Programs, Program Planning, Pedagogy and Curriculum Development; (2) Other Meanings: Participation in NFE as Sensitization or Empowerment ?; and (3) Other Meanings: Participatory NFE as a Movement for Regeneration and the Democratization of Culture.

While the first emergent thematic area was drawn primarily from data provided by interviewees who were change agents working in the NFE Literacy Program initiated by SAVE in the Gorkha district, the remaining themes (Other Meanings) were drawn from interview data provided by the three research participants who were not directly engaged in the SAVE initiative. This distinction has been made and should be noted while making interpretations based on the following analysis.

Changing Rural Individuals and Communities: Encouraging Participation in NFE Literacy Programs, Program Planning, Pedagogy and Curriculum Development

Interviewees tended to define the development problem in terms of lack of informational, educational and material inputs necessary to transform the rural individual and the community (the problems are defined primarily in terms of deficiencies or shortcomings in the rural individual and their communities) in order to facilitate assimilation into a national process of development. The NFE literacy program was seen to provide or seen as having the potential to provide some or all of these necessary inputs for their development. However, existing social and cultural habits and/or lack of motivation made it difficult for prospective participants to see the importance of participating in these programs. Consequently, the development problem also became one of trying to secure program involvement and continuity or sustainability. While organization and leadership training and awareness of available government services were seen as necessary to help sustain the program in the long run, material inputs were seen as a possible motivational tool, in terms of securing program involvement.

Having discussed the problem in terms of motivating prospective participants to join the programs, participation in planning, pedagogy and curriculum development were also seen as ways of keeping participants motivated and interested continuing with the program. This was also seen to be essential for long term program sustainability.

The development problem: Securing program involvement, winning over minds, correcting wrong ways and removing social evils, and providing a message to bring about improvements in their situation. The development problem was described primarily in terms of the need for rural participants to realize the benefits that could accrue to them, if they were to embrace the educational (literacy) and community development programs (infra-structure, agriculture, natural resource management) being suggested by change agents who felt these programs could bring about improvements in their lives. Information, educational inputs and various forms of technical training were seen to provide the basis for individual and community change.

> Like we discuss the benefits of education and literacy and the problems and more that it is about benefits. We explain this to them. Then we talk about forest management or agriculture and old traditional customs and how they can and need to be removed. . . . We bring in resource persons for personal hygiene, family planning, agriculture, rehabilitation etc. to provide training. By making these people come and talk to the village committees we get them involved in community development activities like getting them to build roads or telling them that this should also be considered for these reasons and like that. We should improve the village, then only can we have progress. We talk about other villages which have attempted these things and say that they have done literacy classes and this is what they have achieved as far as developing their community goes. We tell them that they should participate in the literacy class and then only we can provide benefits for them like those other villages and places that have participated. Then only will you benefit and gain from this.
>
> What we have to be aware of is that we are trying to win over their minds. We want them to benefit from the policy and the process that has been outlined and we want to make them understand the benefits of following these methods and policies for them. . . . We have to get them to come to class and motivate them and make them literate.
>
> So, there should be alot of program participants. For this we have to get facilitators to get more people to take part in the classes and then to see more of these people include what they have learnt into their daily lives to bring about improvement in their situation. We are taking a message and they are beginning to take advantage of this message more and more in their lives.

The development problem was discussed in terms of the need to change detrimental cultural and social practices in the intervened communities.

> We must also learn about their society and culture and traditions. We study it and if there is something wrong with it, we are going to change it. If they are doing something in the wrong way, we correct it or if it is in the negative we make it positive.
>
> If you want to make them like you, you are not doing the right thing. But if there are social undesirabilities, then as a facilitator and helper, you are supposed to help. It doesn't mean that you are imposing them or controlling them -- to correct a person from walking on the wrong path is your duty -- so, if you could do that, if you could make them realize that, then you did your duty.
>
> If wife-beating is their cultural part, I won't accept it -- if alcoholism is their cultural part, no, I won't accept that culture. If there are some social undesirability's, then you are there to intervene -- these are some basic problems in a poor society. They are poor and they are frustrated and frustration leads them to do all these things you know. So, this sorts of social evils, you have that responsibility to that society, the responsibility to remove social evils from the society. While fulfilling your responsibility you have to intervene, you have to talk to them, you have to make your say -- no, no, no, you are not doing the right thing. It may sound as if you are imposing but what harm does it do if you make these people realize by your statement, by your association, by your saying -- if they come to the right track then OK.
>
> Again, not sending girls to school -- that is another cultural aspect in rural areas. But in a national context, all people have to be educated, all people have to be made productive -- so, girls are equally important as boys. You may talk to the people about this and cite examples from other contexts about what is happening but there are ways -- controlling means you don't have to beat, you don't have to be sour, you don't have to be very commanding or authoritative -- just talking to them, citing examples from other countries or from their own reality about people who are doing this, citing good examples about this -- for this your association and contact with these people must be continuous, you have to be very watchful and very much sensitive not to hurt these people again.
>
> Maybe there are some people who culturally, do not use the toilet -- they like to go to the open field -- that is their culture. If that culture is not helping them, not helping in the sense that it is creating some health problems, then they should change that culture. OK if it is in a distant field then fine but with increase in population space is narrowing and this is not possible. And if they defecate on the side of the street, then who is going to benefit ? It is of course a bad thing for themselves and their society. Once they said their culture is to defecate outside so they did it on the wall of the latrine and the pigs used to clean it -- but the pigs died and things just collected -- what sort of culture is that -- personally I do not accept that.
>
> There are cultural things which if they are helpful for improving the quality of life then OK but then in the name of culture, if people are just you know, suffering, ill-health and suffering all sorts of difficulties, I won't accept that as culture. Those are just unacceptable bad habits.

According to another interviewee, change has taken place when he sees that " . . . they don't drink dirty water anymore or they use latrines or they send their kids, girls and boys, to school and when there is a sense that we need to be responsible for change in our community."

The development problem: Need for building local capacity, organization and leadership and awareness of governmental services. The Education Program Officer for SAVE emphasized the need for building on local capacities, providing training in leadership and organizational skills and the need to create awareness of the various government services and facilities that are available for the development of rural participants in the literacy programs. He felt that this was important for program sustainability and women's participation in the rural development process.

> . . . we are trying to build local leadership and institutions, so that even after SAVE leaves the programs will continue -- it is like trying to make the programs more sustainable. In this way, the education program -- literacy program -- has been very important because it has allowed us to reach the people at an individual level, like the female literacy program has at least 20-25 females from different houses in each class. So, with one literacy class, direct linkage is established with the community at the family level -- 25 families.
>
> In the beginning, people were not aware of the resources available in their community. For example, there are different type of line agencies and government agencies that are supposed to provide different types of services and facilities but as they were not aware of these facilities, they were not able to tap these resources. But since the education program they have been able to develop themselves and are now coming to different line agencies and asking support and many are using support from the government. Personally, I see VDC (Village Development Committees) and rural committees as a major breakthrough, especially for the females. In Nepal, women's activities are limited to the household and outside contact is for the males -- through the education programs, this is one of the changes -- women's is organizing the groups and they are coming to district offices and land agencies and asking -- they want to start a plantation, they want financing for a project or treatment for their cattles.
>
> After the end of literacy class we form a women's group and after that we give the training on how to manage the groups, how to develop leadership capabilities, how the role is for the leader, what are the resources available to them in the district, what other supports they could get and we try to make linkage with them. This is how we are working so that after this training, this group will be able to work by themselves independently.
>
> So, like this, we keep emphasizing the need to build on the capacity of the local people and what already exists there and what support they need to strengthen their energy, resources, and ability. How could we use resources better, how people could be motivated to do community development work by themselves. Especially we talk about the training needs, what type of training they are requiring.

According to this interviewee, change has occurred with the establishment of rural committees and VDCs, especially since they provide a forum for women who now know where to go and ask for support from the district offices and land agencies in the way of financing for a project or treatment for cattle or for starting plantations.

The development problem: Need for tangible material inputs and resources. Interviewees discussed the need for material and financial support, providing several reasons as to why this could be a development problem. According to one interviewee, material support was necessary as a motivational tool, given the meager resources of these communities. Educational skills acquired could then be translated into their daily lives. Another interviewee felt that rural participants always cited material concerns as their primary problem and if participation meant starting from the problems cited by the people, then it was necessary to provide for these supports, including these material supports.

> Lot of agencies working on NFE for rural development have objectives that are focused on the improvement of life skills but when you go to the field the reality is different. All programs dissipate into literacy activities which is very easy and because of that, people just drop out. Participation rate is always decline because the program is always focused on literacy activity. Literacy may be one of the important things for them but the really important thing for them is to have some tangible results and this is not happening because of lack of material supports. They need material supports because if they get material support then you can involve them in transferring acquired skills into their lives which will provide them, which will bring some tangible benefits into their lives. That is the main factor for generating their interest -- if it is missing, then they may come there to the program but that is only because you are there and if we don't go then the government will not be happy. So, literacy alone will not create the participation.
>
> In order to increase the participation, real participation, emotional participation, physical participation, they have to be supported, support in the form of something tangible, something concrete so that they could earn and that will also arouse their motivation.

> If you go to development area and introduce yourself as a development worker then they will think that you are there to give them a drinking water system or a health post or a bridge or school or road -- these things. This is how the rural people think about development. My experience has been this way that at first they will talk about construction work or physical works. They will not talk about literacy class and about building awareness -- they want to see something like if you construct a school building then they will say this project has done this and this is very good.
>
> One other thing is that although we say that we have to do whatever the community people want and response to their needs but sometimes we decide by our own self sometimes because we have our own standards of working -- we have our own policies. I will give you an example -- for example we will not do any construction work even if we see a great need for a school building or water systems but we will try to get people to think about other sorts of activities which is long lasting and sustainable -- so sometimes we may differ with the need of the community people and what they will think.

Participation in planning for NFE literacy programs. The process of planning NFE literacy programs, the teaching-learning process and the curriculum generation process are other opportunities for motivating program participants to continue to participate in the program. An interviewee expressed this sentiment with regard to program planning as follows:

> . . . if we involve them from the planning, they will feel more own-ness -- this is my own program, this is for us -- and they will want to remain with it.
>
> . . . they must not feel that the program is for our but is for their development -- unless they realize this they will not be supportive. If they feel that they are going to class to give us a job then they will stop coming and even the staff hired locally

> will not be employed anymore. It should not be like this -- they should feel it is for them and this requires their participation also.

1. Process of intervention and choice of problem: Adjusting felt needs or prioritizing ? The Education Program Officer for SAVE discussed this process as follows:

> From the planning we try to emphasize the participatory approach wherever possible -- for example, we will not say that we have the money or the budget for ten literacy class and that we want to give ten classes. We will first discuss with the community people whether this is their need or interest or not. And if we find that literacy class is their interest, then we form the class -- so participation is from the planning.
>
> Even though we may be having certain policies we still cannot impose whatever we want -- the working system is that our field staff will visit the community and discuss with them what it is that they want to do and make a list of what the people want to do. Then they start doing the feasibility and give the priority -- say if they give a list of ten we will say that we can support only five for now and they will then discuss among themselves and select these five. We cannot impose the program on them -- whatever we do we have to take their consent and their approval -- so if they say we are not interested in this project then we don't do it -- we have to talk again if they start prioritizing a project which in our policy is not a priority. In that time when we are having difference of opinion then we have to re-convince about why we are suggesting what we are suggesting -- why we are not trying to adjust their felt needs and what they are expecting.
>
> In the beginning these kind of things are difficult -- for example, in one of our project area we have started work for last two years and before that we have done the baseline survey and during the baseline survey most of the community people said they would like to see a water tank system and school building and like these things but when we started with different project like adult literacy program or women's program then they again came to see us after a few months to ask about water system, school building and support to construct a hospital and like these things -- road and bridge construction -- so at the beginning there was more confrontation we had to face in the dialogue and we had to explain and convince our position and now there is less demand for this kind of work and they are understanding the importance of awareness raising and literacy focus or women's programs. Now they are asking more for literacy class and educational programs -- these sort of things.
>
> In the beginning their definition of development is building the school and the bridge, like this. But they will not ask for causes so for example if there is diarrhea then they want to build the hospital. It is difficult for them to say that there is diarrhea because the source of water is contaminated. It takes time to help them see that construction of buildings is not development and that the more important thing is that children are going to these school buildings. Or that construction of the hospital is not as important as becoming aware about health practice and why they are becoming sick and what are the root causes for all this. So, now they are realizing this and there is less confrontation in terms of dialogue. There demands are now different and we are being able to meet them now.

2. Management of the program. The Education Program Officer for SAVE described participation in program management and planning as follows:

> So, if they want a literacy class, it is their responsibility to form the class, make the list and select one person to be the teacher or facilitator of the class. The users or community decide all this and they decide where they want to learn, the venue is theirs -- we don't tell them that they have to meet in this school or this house -- they decide based on what is convenient for them and which time it will be, early or late evening or the night. So, I think all these things are the participatory approach from the beginning.
>
> So, from the planning we involve the community, that is one thing, the other thing is that in the management aspect also, the program is managed by the local community -- each literacy class will form a management committee of at least 5 people consisting of 2-3 members of the literacy class and 2-3 persons from outside the community who is respected. It is their responsibility to see that the class is running and if there is any problem they will solve this and try to make the program effective and if they need supports, we provide it to them.
>
> That is one way to participate, the other is contribution in terms of registration fee, tuition fee, cost for the books -- this is the difference between other programs and ours where everything is free of cost -- they have to contribute -- one of the advantages of this is that only those who are interested will enroll in the class but if you provide free, initially there will be lots of people but by next week the number of drop-outs will be quite high. By the end of the program only 5 people or so will complete. So, if we are raising their contribution, the program is going to be much more effective.

3. Problems with securing participation by all community members. Interviewees pointed out that securing participation of all the members of the community was easier said than done. Politics, internal and external to the community and certain social and cultural biases, made it difficult for all groups to participate in the manner desired by the intervening change agents.

> If you talk about the planning, sometimes it is a problem to motivate the community people because some of the political leaders they will try to hold the community -- even if we want to meet the community people they want to form a block between the people and ourselves and try to pull the resources wherever they want to different areas and this creates problems for us. Sometimes we are misguided because we do not have enough information on the area and we have to rely on other people's information. Or political people try to dominate the program and if we are hiring a facilitator they would like to see their people in place and now that we have a multiparty system, the political people see things from their point of view -- so, if there is a facilitator from the Leftist Front, then all the people who are not of that party will not join the class. We try to avoid this from the beginning by making it clear to the community that we will not hire anybody who is politically active. If it happens then we meet with the community and try to convince them to change this situation.
>
> Females may be motivated but because of the culture and gender bias, males sometimes do not allow the wife or sister to go to the class. Or females are not being represented in the committee process -- again a majority of these people will be male -- they will be talking about the water tap system but if you see in our village it is mostly the women who will go to fetch the water from the tap and not the man but they are deciding where we should construct the tap and how we should do this -- so this is one of the weakness part of the participatory approach. So, when we do make a committee, we try to make sure that atleast two three people are female so that some female voices are heard in the process.

Participant-centered pedagogy. The Education Program Officer and the NFE Coordinator for SAVE described the teaching and learning process as striving to be "learner-centered". They discussed this process in terms of what they were attempting to achieve in the literacy classes with the rural participants and also in terms of what they were getting village based facilitators to understand about the teaching-learning process during their training exercises.

The Education Program Officer described the participatory teaching-learning process as follows:

> The other is about the participatory teaching-learning -- the materials is designed in such a way that we do not start with the alphabet but go with posters that address 25 key words or so -- literacy primers. For example, this is one open-ended poster (picture of a rural scene on the banks of a river with different people engaged in different activities that depended on the river) -- participants will be divided into groups and they will be asked to see the picture and discuss what is happening here and in each group one person is selected by the group to be the group leader and they will discuss and analyze and the group leader will report back what they have seen in this picture. For each class there will be four to five groups. After this, the facilitator will supplement this with other additional information that they will need. The other way that the facilitator could do that is to say that this is contaminated water and this is the diseases one could get and tell them but this is not what is happening. They discuss what they see first and then the facilitator adds information and then they go to the words -- for example, this is about water so the key words start with water -- so, this is also a participatory method in teaching-learning and curriculum is designed in such a way that it allows more participation of the learners.

The NFE Coordinator explained the training process for village-based facilitators as follows:

> In the beginning they (village-based facilitators) are very shy and lack confidence. So for the first couple of days, we have group work sessions. They have to take leadership and make presentations to the group. First we teach them about the theory of teaching and learning process and something about the content, then we take them for practical experience itself to try it out. This builds confidence. We also give them a guide book which outlines the whole process of the class -- what comes first and then what comes after that, like that. It is very planned, that is there are fixed steps that are set out in these teaching guides about what to teach and how to teach it. Like for example, picture discussion -- first a group is made, then a leader is chosen. They discuss and analyze the picture in groups and then the various leaders come forward and make a presentation. And then the facilitator gets back to each group and the class about what they missed and failed to see. That is our method.
>
> We make them role play during the training and this brings up some of the participants problems and we use this as a chance to discuss how they can try to help participants to solve their problems. Participation in teaching-learning process is two way communications. Both people talk -- participants and facilitator. That is our main theme -- participant centered. Teacher talks less and is the guide and participants are involved in their work. Like in maths, addition. The teacher first shows how to do a problem and then the people sit in groups and do these kinds of

> problems and the teacher guides each group -- like this, group work. This is participant centered.

As far as problems with the process were concerned, the NFE Coordinator expressed the need for facilitators to follow the prescribed method.

> Sometimes the facilitators don't go according to the pre-plan as we taught in the training process. Poor people, sometimes they don't follow the teaching method that we trained them in and start to go their own way. This is not right because the amount of achievement that we are seeking, it is now not possible to get it. The result is not good enough, if they keep going like this.
>
> Sometimes this has happened. They say, we have learnt this procedure and method in training but some times we can't apply it so we go our own way. Or sometimes the village people tell the facilitator that this is not the right way, like in formal classes they start with the alphabet and here we are teaching them from pictures and word generation -- so they tell the facilitator to go back to the alphabet because that is the right way to teach literacy. So we tell them to follow the procedure only. We have to motivate them to see the sense in this approach so sometimes slowly slowly we bring them onto the track, bring them back to the procedure because we have to get them to come to class and motivate them and make them literate.

Curriculum and learner-generated-materials. Curriculum for the literacy phase (usually six months) is a government literacy package, while the post-literacy phase (follow-up phase of six months duration) also relies on a book that is produced and distributed by the Nepalese government. However, it is in the post-literacy phase that participants were encouraged to share their stories and experiences, which were then written up and used in other classes -- learner-generated-materials.

> Yes. That is very interesting -- up to now we have had 3-4 workshops like that. In that workshop, we invite the learners who have graduated from literacy class and we ask them that you are here to develop materials and until this time you have read materials written by other people like us -- definitely they might have done the need assessment, field test and revision but still that is from the top level but you have to design the materials by yourself. We give them time to write what they want and in that process we give them training about how to write, what steps to follow, what to do before writing materials, what to do to revise materials, how to edit within the groups -- all these things we introduce them to. See these are examples of material collected from them and we have even used their exact handwritings and printed it that way as it was written by them -- they are more excited to see their own handwriting in the books. Even though it doesn't seem nice, they are more excited to see this and this is a new experience for us.
>
> OK, there are several step-- one way is "free writing" we do not ask any topics, you have trained, you write whatever you want without any idea from us. The other way is, we collect objects like books, pencils, contraceptives, fruits and vegetables and put it in front of them and say, you select any one and write whatever you want about that object. And then we are asking how do you feel about this process and they may say now we are more comfortable to write because we have one object in our hand to focus on -- so like this there are several steps we do. The other thing is we could ask for areas or topics of interest and we list all forty or fifty different areas and they select one to write on that they want -- if they want to do this as a group then the group of four or five people will select what

> topic they want. Then we train the group again before they write -- like we tell them to do a free-writing exercise where we tell them that before you write just think in your mind how you will organize your study -- what you will write first and so and so on, what will be the conclusion and how you will present it -- just discuss among yourself. They discuss and then among the group whoever has good handwriting they will start to write. When they finish they read back and the group edits if they want changes. Then this is discussed in the large group and if changes need to be made, editing occurs again. And if two people are writing individually, they form a group of two and read each others writing and give suggestions on what they like and what they would prefer was different. And then we discuss the rules for writing and comprehension exercise that they would like to attach to each write-up and this tells us how much they have understood about the process.

The above themes suggest that these interviewees tended to view participation as a motivational ingredient in a process that sought to get rural people involved in programs that were seen to be essential for their benefit. Since the development problem was constructed in terms of the need to secure program involvement and to change obstructing cultural interpretations and behavior, participation in planning and organizing the educational process, in the pedagogical process and in curriculum development, was viewed as a motivation building/sustaining process, essential for the program's long term sustainability. Building awareness of available government services and the need for providing material inputs could also serve a motivational function in this regard -- a form of tangible assistance that would be instrumental in illustrating the benefits of joining in the literacy program and other related SAVE programs.

As pointed out earlier, three interviewees were not directly associated with this NFE Literacy Program being conducted by SAVE. Two of these participants were researchers at The Center For Educational Research and Innovation (CERID), Tribhuvan University, while a third was a research activist and university professor engaged in voluntary action in his community. All these participants have been working in the field of NFE for rural development for over a decade, both, in an institutional capacity and in terms of personal voluntary action. The following perspectives and themes have been drawn from their experience with NFE programs in Nepal.

Other Meanings: Participation in NFE Processes as Sensitization or Empowerment ?

The development problem: Guided participation by persuaders. An interviewee described participation in NFE as being a "guided" process, whereby change agents were simply "persuading" participants to come in "numbers", to "speak out and discuss" issues/problems that they (change agents) had decided upon. These discussions were then being treated as the pedagogical content of the educational process.

> First, participation has simply meant numbers -- if one year there were 20 women in the program and this increased to 30 next year, then they say that this is

> participation. Involvement is not participation -- you can push people to come and be involved in body and in speech but it is still persuading them -- in participation people will be interested in saying something by themselves, it's not that we shall have to guide them but they will come forward, they will discuss for their ownself.
>
> Planners are still trying to persuade the people -- its not people's participation, its their participation and their way of thinking about participation. Planners and field agents are trying to enforce their ideas through participation -- they are persuaders and for that persuasion they use the term participation. They are acting like leaders and because our people have this cultural bias to listen to what the big people from outside have to say, they say, if he is suggesting that we need to talk about this issue, then the issue must be important, so we will talk about it.
>
> Right now, what we are doing is that participation has meant participating in the pedagogy of content and in NFE what we are trying to do is make everybody share in the pedagogy of content -- what we are trying to do is make every person speak, something what they have -- that's participation now. Trying to get grassroots level people to discuss the cases, the issues by themselves. But this is also guided participation because the planners want to discuss the situation -- they don't take the issue from the people but they decide the issue and throw it at the people and ask them what's their perception towards it. So, this is what I term guided participation -- not the voluntarily developed participation.

The development problem: The need to link participation and empowerment. According to the same interviewee, guided participation will only cease to exist when the notion of empowerment is linked with the concept of participation, where the content is the people's and they are interested in joining the process voluntarily.

> It seems to me that participation is essential to empower people but in our context this is not being done -- it is sensitization, not empowerment. What we are doing, that's sensitization. So, our NFE processes are trying to make people sensitized about the situation, quite confined to the domestic activities only, not trying to make people think more and more about their own . . . . Participation is essential for the empowerment of the people but the content should not be guided. The content should be their own. The cultural biases, our cultural biases is that we want to listen big people -- whether this is right or wrong you can analyze in your own perspective. But the thing is we want to listen people, we don't want to be vocal -- that is our cultural heritage.
>
> For participation you need empowerment -- if you empower some people, then participation is possible -- so, there is a great relationship between empowerment and participation. If you are trying to persuade something -- that is not participation, it may be token participation. People are supposed to say something so they say it and that is the participation. So, in that situation we are not trying to link participation and empowerment -- that is the case.

The process of empowering education: Listening to their problem, posing questions for discussion, sharing avenues and options, injecting/vaccinating or blending new ideas. The interviewee went on to elaborate on what he considered to be an empowering process of education, where he described the change agent's role as a "passive listener".

> I talk to the people, I listen the people. I will keep silent, I will say nothing. Just go with them and listen what they say. If I am really trying to empower people, so

> I shouldn't be active. I should be a passive listener. Then after, I will have only one question, what can I do, what can we do, what can you do ? Then after, the situation will be unfold. Then I believe that participation will evolve genuinely. They have anxiety, they have resentment, they have ideas and different things to say -- so I have just listened them. And just smile and say that all these things that you have said, can you do anything about them. I think empowerment doesn't seek leadership through the whole situation. Empowerment creates leadership within themselves. I believe that my role is minimal.

He then went on to explain how problems needed to be chosen and how problem posing was supposed to generate discussion. The problems and issues and the answers had to be defined by the participants, while the change agent would act as a "problem poser" attempting to generate discussion.

> Then I will pose a problem with them. Like, I said, how many rich people are there in this country and how much money do you think they have ? Now, how many people are there and if we were to divide the rich person's money between each and every person, will that be enough to live on for you ? And they had no answer -- so, I said, what is the point of agitating against the crown and these rich people ? Again, no answer. So, I think we have to generate discussion in that way and that I believe is participation.
>
> I didn't try to say that you have to discuss in this line or that you have to do this and that -- we just listen them and what she said, I just posed a problem. Answer is theirs, I didn't have any ready-made answers. So, I think that's different -- here in the traditional system that we are doing, the answer is ours. In my situation, the answer is theirs.
>
> The problem itself differs from man to man and situation to situation because what we sometimes think is the problem to us, that may not be the problem to all the people. For example, health problem that we are discussing may not be perceived by the people of the village. We have to go far to collect water, so we don't want de-worming medicine to deal with health issues that you see, we need water taps. So, our perceptions are somehow different, so my sense of participation says to me, yes, in that situation, what can we do then ? I just take their problem and move with it, I don't tackle/challenge their sense of the problem and say it is an issue of health first. I shouldn't say them that this is your problem -- they should say by themselves.

The interviewee did not question the possibility that "problem posing", as demonstrated in the above example concerning "distributive justice" can be a dynamic that is leading and directing in nature. However, he went on to suggest that when it came to dealing with problems, it was important to avoid judgment of their ways and to test the effectiveness of "traditional ways", rather than simply imposing on them with "modern ways". Facilitation of the process would involve suggesting additional avenues of recourse.

> So, I believe this can be done without interfering them without instructing them, we have to listen to them, they have their ideas, they may be reluctant at first to speak but if they have the different avenues, they will explore by themselves. Or as a facilitator, I should have to find out the avenues only-- they will select this by themselves and I will not say that this is bad and this is good, like that.

> For example, health. We tell them, don't use this witchcraft or these herbs and go directly to the healthpost -- we teach them in such a way. In a situation where there are 40 thousand people with one healthpost doctor, in that situation are we authorized to say so ? I will just give them the options -- option one, do witchcraft, two - use herbs, three -- go the healthpost and like that, for them to choose. I will just discuss with them the limitations of each and what we could do if one option didn't work and then what we will do -- different options that they can choose for themselves and see.
>
> There are some ideas that we think are bad but they should be respected and carried on and there are ideas which are bad and should be injected -- if the idea is to be injected, like the use of vaccine. It should be injected through dialogue and there are other ideas like use of cows urine as a fertilizer but we say that is not good and say just use the urea, that is okay. And then we just transfer the information on how much urea to use and how to use without looking at their effective practices in this area. Cows urine has been effective so why are we just changing it. So, we should have to be find out their ideas. Similarly, people use crushed tobacco with water as a pesticide -- that idea should be refined, we should have to look that idea and should have to find out what is the strength behind it. Then after that we will be eligible to say that yes this idea was tested but without knowing it we are trying to use and persuade our idea to use the chemical fertilizers and pesticide.
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> Big people's learning is based on their own experience and not on the experience of the small people or the village people, so what they learn from village people is only surface -- they learn that people are poor because they don't have any access to market, they didn't say that we have sustainable agriculture system, they didn't say that if you don't use the chemical fertilizer we can use the cows urine -- what big people are seeing is that people don't know and that we know everything, we have to teach them, we have to guide them, we have to instruct them. My perception is that they know everything and we have to enable their ideas, we have to test their ideas, we have to find the strengths and weaknesses of their ideas and then only we can say that this idea has this much strength and this much weakness -- now you chose and people will chose the strong idea and leave the weak idea.
>
> Our ideas are western ideas. For example, breast feeding -- it is our cultural practice to do it so what place does it have to teach them not to do this ? Similarly, we ask them to use toilet. In Dhangiri, UNESCO people taught them to build pit-latrines. What happened was that rain water flooded the pit and every house was soon flooded with sewage. In that situation, can we say to the people that what we do is right -- no, they will have to see for themselves the strength and weakness of each situation and choose by themselves. Or, I had gone to Manang, a mountain area in Nepal -- every house I found there was a toilet -- so I went to check one out and I found a spiders web there. So, I decide to find out why they built it if they were not using it. What I found is that they built it for the big people -- some big people came there and said that they should have to have a toilet so they made a toilet and so I said why you don't go there and they say they feel some sort of suffocation to go there because of the smell.

The interviewee then went on to elaborate on how new ideas could be "injected" like a "vaccine" (when there are "bad" ideas), in the form of additional avenues for the participants to consider, when they were in the process of dealing with a problem. He suggested the need to "blend" the new ways (information) with their ways, while trying to understand their "methods of analysis" for arriving at conclusions, rather than arrogantly imposing a "new method of analysis".

> Modern ideas should be blend with the old ideas and should not be directly intervened -- it should be blended. For example, I said the use of toilet -- this is modern idea. So, we can discuss, if we are to defecate everywhere, what will be the situation. If we defecate in a particular place, what will be the situation. Then people will choose which one. There is every scope of using the modern idea to the old one but it should be blended with their practice and there should be analysis of the strength and weakness of every idea. Then afterwards it is people who will share the idea and decide -- it is not we who will have to decide this for them.
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> The analysis will be done according to their parameters, maybe based on tradition or whether something is more effective or not. So, they analyze things differently with different parameters -- sometimes cultural-tradition, or big-man analysis or something else but they have a parameter and we should also try to understand this before just imposing a new method of analysis. But they will always compare situations and find what works for them, whatever the parameters for analysis.
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> So, first I listen them and we talk about what is the strength and reason behind a practice and then later, I will discuss and add my perspective too but this is being done with a view to first analyze and understand their cultural practice without using your own practice to judge whether there's is good or bad. And if I have a different idea than them, I will put it out as information but I will not say it is a good thing, I will say that you should try to find out for yourself and choose your own way to try these different options.
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> If they cannot make the connection between defecating upstream and getting disease and they want to know about it, then again I will open up the discussion and ask them what they may be able to think about this -- what is the new problem now ? What is polluted water and I will still try to find out their ideas on the subject and to continue to share my own ideas with them in this way. What I am doing is blending modern ways of thinking and modern knowledge with their ways.

Other Meanings: Participatory NFE as a Movement for Regeneration and the Democratization of Culture

The development problem: Nurturing traditional participatory culture and avoiding alien structures of non-participation. Another interviewee discussed participatory NFE as a process whose purpose is to build a movement to "regenerate" the "ways" of the participants, "ways" that were being lost in the process of change. According to him, this would be worthwhile because rural cultures are often more participatory than the "development culture". Therefore, participatory NFE, while attempting to "regenerate" what communities already have or had, is also a process that seeks to "democratize culture" by giving a voice to "their ways", rather than creating and/or imposing "alien structures".

> Marxist development or the dominant development culture seek to destroy where these people come from -- they are too critical of the past. We tend to create a totally alien structure. What we need to do is move more towards what communities already have and what they have lost. So, it is not about changing and transforming them but about regenerating what they used to have. Now the question is of strengthening and regenerating what the community already has rather than trying to change and transform it according to Marxist or socialist progressive structures.
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> In this sense, development programs have tended to be an imposition of these alien structures -- the way these programs have come, globally and nationally, they

> have tended to promote non-participation. So, if we are to talk in terms of participation, we have to talk about it in terms of being anti-development and therefore, as educators, our task becomes one of the critique of development as being non-participatory and of re-vitalizing the indigenous processes of the community to make participation possible again.
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> Traditional culture, in spite of its problems, is already participatory, especially when compared to the development culture or the culture of the expert, and therefore it should be nurtured. It gives them a sense of community.

As has been suggested, this process of cultural democratization and regeneration becomes necessary and is the task of participatory NFE because of the forces of change that impose "reproduction" (of their own ways) and cultural elitism (ours is a superior way that you need to adopt). The "development culture" is construed as one force of change that is considered anti-democratic and non-participatory, given that it seeks to replace the "ways" of the participants. The role of the provision of material and financial aid is criticized in this vein.

> Basically the question of financing has been burdensome in this whole process. In Nepal there is so much development money flowing, it is so irresponsible. The material process totally confuses this process and makes it totally non-participatory. The idea is to regenerate and for that you have to think completely different social structures, different communication, different technology, different exchanges. Now we have built six or seven water sources for these people with the help of some of my sources and I could continue to bring money to build latrines and other things or should the struggle be that these people claim this public land to do these things for themselves from what this land can provide for them ? There is always resources for people to claim, anywhere in the world. So the choice is to either claim public property and make that your struggle or bring money and help from outside and now I am beginning to be convinced that the only way to make it participatory and sustainable is for these people to claim this land and struggle for that. And they should do on this land whatever development it is.
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> That building that I made for them, that is a contradiction of the development process. It was well intended but now I see it as a mistake because it is now the center of non-participation. People, instead of talking in their neighborhoods and jhopris (huts), now have to come here to discuss simple things and walk for two hours to get here sometimes. So, it has become a point of centralization rather than decentralization. Also, because of that building now, a certain group of village women that want prestige from the building are there and they have a vested interest that I have helped to perpetuate by building that building.
>
> If they are in desperate situation, then again we will have to go back to the community and their way of dealing with this -- the sense of the traditional charity. Do the Puja (prayer) and give charity -- every community has the moral economy -- I would rather go there than to bring USAID money here. When we studied in school, before we ate, we put "muthi daan" (donation) for the school -- we built the school. Today what is happening to that sense of community -- they cannot even generate 5Rs for the community. See what we lost. Now, can you compensate that by bringing one crore rupees from outside ?

Similarly, other forces that were seen to compound this process of non-participation included intra-communal tendencies relating to issues of gender, caste, hierarchical dispositions vis-a-vis leadership and knowledge, the influence of external political process and the apparent tendency to blame and penalize individuals (failure to assess the impact of systemic structures in affecting individual attitude and behavior). These are factors that the interviewee referred to as the "historical limitations" and personal/communal limitations of participation.

> Our knowledge process and attitude to leadership and organization is so elitist, caste-ist, patriarchal, hierarchical and individualistic -- like you are a chamar (shoemaker) and I am a Brahmin (holy men/men of the book) -- so it is against the participatory approach. When the women collectivize and organize, the people against the women's movement are so clever, they shift the issue from gender to caste and we have to bring back to caste the issue of gender.
>
> Or what happens after institutionalization for women ? The initial unity brought on by women's issues is now very fragile because after institutionalization, they are participating in the larger political party process, especially after the success of democratic reforms in the country and party loyalties are intervening in their process as women. You see, the parties don't want to see an autonomous women's organization, they want them to join the parties. I would be in support of autonomy as a movement for women but it is a struggle and we don't know which way it will go. But there are people who have been with it in the beginning and they want to join party process and also remain autonomous, all these things. Today, it will be extremely difficult to establish autonomous group process -- it has to go to either the communist or the democrats or whatever.
>
> Or the democratization of leadership or collective leadership has failed -- there is such a long history of elitist leadership -- it has failed. So, again one has to bring back the question that this is a movement and not an organization to give the Brahmin people again the high hand over everything.
>
> Or there is alot of tendency to blame the individual or the victim, like in the case of rape. They will say the woman has a poor character -- so we have to create a pool of information to demonstrate that this is not happening to one individual but that it is a phenomenon common to the area over time and that therefore, it cannot be a question of so many bad women but may well be related to a structure of exploitation based on gender, ethnicity and caste -- a collective and systemic process. To bring them to that collective level is the thing because it will create a different interpretation of the problem.
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> So these are some of the historical limitations to achieving a participatory culture and it is important to recognize this because this tells you why it cannot happen over night. You can discuss or train but when it comes to action people forget because they are born with all these things that are non-participatory and this elitism of all kinds. And the old people, it is especially difficult for them and they are resistant because they have been doing it for so long that it is probably beyond their capacity to be democratic. Not only that, there is also a limit to communal connectedness as well and that complicates this process because people have come from all over the place -- migrants, so that the historical capital that links them, the memories are not the same and this makes community processes of participation difficult.

The process of participatory NFE for regeneration and the democratization of culture. The interviewee described the task of participatory NFE and the process at work, in terms of a women's literacy effort that gradually evolved into a women's organization that took up various gender-related problems in the community.

Issues and problems were defined by the women, while analysis was jointly conducted by them and the interviewee and his wife, who were the change agents in the initiative. Their task (the change agents') was to get participants to analyze problems at the "collective level" -- helping them to develop an understanding of the nature and dynamics of social structures of exploitation based on gender, ethnicity and caste. Otherwise, as has already been suggested, the tendency of participants was to dwell on individual blame alone.

Learning occurred not through text book discussion but through reflections initiated by participants (which were based on their problems concerning daily living) and action to remedy and further reflect on the need to change depressing circumstances. In addition, the change agents also helped mutual learning by encouraging reflection on "traditional ways and knowledge" -- the process of regeneration referred to earlier -- in areas such as ecology and environment.

> People here started saying why don't you help with development here. So we got together with some people and asked them what they would like to do and what do they think is important for them to do and usually they would say, teach our children English -- tuition. The middleclass ideology was rampant -- roads, schools, bridges, english, hospitals -- so, for three months we did nothing but begin to look at some of these ideas critically. We talked about the advantages and disadvantages of different suggestions, discussed the formation of this mind set as well -- why is this mindset.
>
> Ultimately what began to emerge was a whole number of womens issues so we began to develop a curriculum around that which was unique in that we copied nothing but created the curriculum around the issues. Like about firewood, co-wives, land rights of women. We used codification and de-codification schemes around key words generated in the discussions along the Freirian method. Like "daora", firewood, we made a codification of it. It was around the third or fourth week of discussing this issue that we realized how sensitive and how organic this issue was to the life of the women. Spontaneously they made a song about the history of their difficulties with daora and that mountain range out there from where they have had to fetch wood for so many years, everyday. The memory of the migration from the hills to here. They made this spontaneously on the spot and then we went into problems of land rights for women, problems of co-wives, wife beating.
>
> So, when some people said we have this wife beating in our family and neighborhood, then some people said what shall we do about it ? We don't want to read or write about wife beating -- we want to do something real, this is not on the paper. So, for every class, they formed a group and went and visited families where the problems occurred, like their own and discussed the problem with the husband and wife and like this they carried on in every class and after about the third month, it was no longer a literacy program but like a women's movement. So, this is how they moved from literacy to women's issues and it looks like under the umbrella of literacy, they were able to organize for women's issues -- the political atmosphere was there. Soon from this women's awareness movement they formed a woman's organization on International Women's Day in March, 1987. What started as a literacy class has culminated in this.

> However, when they discuss women's issues, there is often a tendency to blame the victim I find. For example, in one situation two teenagers had a relationship which resulted in the girl becoming pregnant. But because the boy's family is from the purest Brahmin caste -- Upadhyaya Brahmin -- and the girl's family is one lower category in the Brahmin caste group, the boy and his father have sold everything here and disappeared into the mountains again. And the two liked each other but the family came in between and rejected them. Now this case is in front of the women's organization about what to do for sustaining the woman and her child.
>
> First thing is how to fizzle out the idea that this woman has a poor character and to show other cases to see it as a phenomenon rather than the problem of one individual and this is so difficult and that's where people like us have a role. Like they come and talk to you saying this happened and this happened but at the end they will always say, but she is bad isn't she ? It is her own fate or it is her own character -- she should have been careful, she should not have slept with that boy. So half of them is aware that there has been an injustice but the other half crushes on it where they see, but she is not trustworthy either -- now how to work on the second half ? My challenge is, that how do you make people re-think about that. That this is not her own problem -- lets see how many women like her have been raped in the tenth grade, been made pregnant and then the boys have left -- then when we go around that then they begin to see, yes this is a gender problem.

Taking the example of another issue, the interviewee explained how traditional knowledge can be "regenerated" through a participatory process of education and joint research in order to develop an ecological curriculum and an ecological movement.

> We are now doing the ethnography of ecological knowledge and history of people like the Tharus, Tamangs and Brahmins and see the three cultural zones. Observational and historical role -- their memory of migration, what they used to do for land, water -- what is their ecological cosmos ? So we are doing an ethnographic history in order to develop an ecological curriculum and an ecological movement. We are trying to create that ethnography based on trying to develop an understanding of how can they relate their culture with nature and the supernatural. There are three axis, one is the human -- how they relate to each other and outsiders -- then there is the natural sphere, then on top of it is the connection of both to the supernatural -- how does their belief have anything to do with agricultural cycles, like that. Then from that you create an ecological curriculum and if it is grounded so much in their history, culture and memory, then it should be able to create ecological action -- so, for now I am engaged in this historical ethnography.
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> And we try to do this in a democratic and participatory setting where all forms of elitism and individual appropriation of knowledge, influence and power will be minimized and everybody can try to express themselves freely. Rather than lecturing on democratic theory, we learn alot about it through ourselves in joint reflection, dialogue and action. So these are some of the democratic process one could engage in to assist in the task of regeneration.

Reflections on Emergent Themes

NFE for Reproduction or Regeneration: Questions of Purpose and Problem

If the purpose of an educational intervention has already been determined by the intervenors as that of being instrumental in securing uncritical assimilation into the modern realities of a modernizing country, regardless of the aspirations and situation of the intervened community or the inadequacies of the system of modernization in meeting the needs of such "different communities of people", how can such a process of "social and cultural reproduction" justifiably be called participatory ? Since the purpose is pre-determined, albeit a broad (often implicit) purpose, the problem of development becomes one of "securing project participation/involvement", where the concept of participation is viewed as a project tool or technique to stimulate motivation and involvement in an externally determined project for the people. This perspective suggests that the agents know what the people should strive for and that they have the method as well, for which they require their cooperation, involvement or "participation". Rural people are, unfortunately and possibly, with all good intentions, being viewed as "deficient by modern standards", thereby making the development problem primarily a case of having to change the "backward behavior" of persons and their immediate communities.

This is in stark contrast to the perspective that sees rural people as victims of a historical process that has its roots in a social structure that has created the conditions that have helped to marginalize them. The development problem is then cast in terms of having to change exploiting, victimizing and anti-democratic social structures and systems of power and privilege that have helped create these marginal situations for these poor people. Then only would rural participants be able to live as they choose to, adopting and/or rejecting various elements of the prevailing structure and system of modernization, in which they are imbedded.

NFE as a process of "regeneration", on the other hand, seeks to give the "voices" back to the people in a process that emphasizes rejuvenation, given the impositional and assimilationist changes that have taken place via the process of "reproduction". While the educational process seeks to give back to people what they have lost and consequently attempts to return control to the community, how far can regeneration avoid or deal with the social-political-economic structures of domination and dependency that the community is imbedded in? What about the structures and processes of domination and non-participation in the community and their role in obstructing the process of freeing people in order that they may live as subjects?

Education, Material Support, Dependency and Non-participation

There appears to be a contradiction concerning the need for material and financial support in "deprived communities" and the question of dependence. Research participants have suggested different positions on the matter.

On the one hand, it would appear that every intervention would have to provide material and financial support to assist people who are living at the margins of existence. On the other hand, if people do not play a vital role in actively solving this material crisis, there is a danger that people might feel that giving up their autonomy and dignity, is a small price to pay for "bread" and the method of delivery then becomes the structure and perpetuator of dependence.

The options for resources, beside the community's own resources, include that of the intervening organization's resources (NGO) and that of the national and state governments. Whatever the source of material and financial support, the method of delivery -- questions of purpose behind providing the support (conditions) and for what it is to be used, how it is provided, how much and when -- becomes vital in making it possible to avoid crossing the thin line between initiating a structure of non-participation and dependency as opposed to facilitation/assistance in a participatory process.

When "project funds" are tied to project objectives which in turn are tied to NGO policy or the national agenda or otherwise (depending on the source of funding), people become "project recipients" -- a process of non-participation is set in motion as the interventionists, alone, control the predetermined purpose (donor determined) to which funds will be directed and utilized. Little attempt is made to share this decision and control with the "recipients" who are allowed limited control over how these funds will be spent (this is often referred to as "participation"), i.e., subject to control by the broader donor determined objectives.

Such a process of donor imposition through the mechanism of funding and material support becomes the primary structure perpetuating dependency. It confuses the prospects for true participation in that the donor, for all intensive purposes, utilizes material as a powerful tool (given that the participants' need is so great) to affect motivation and exact the "right kind of behavior". Consequently, "recipients" and "objects" of donor support "act out their prescribed roles" in order to ensure delivery of the material support. These problems are compounded when the donor provides "too much" and "too soon", overwhelming the process and stifling any movement towards facilitating a community-based initiative to resolve this crisis. That is, the experiential learning that comes through the participatory process or people's struggle to resolve their own crisis is sabotaged.

The tendency in such "projects" is to emphasize the role of material and finance (directly or indirectly) and thereby construct the development problem in this manner, propelling the process towards a situation where a lot of financial and material support is seemingly required. The road to dependency is then paved with gold and cannot be sustained indefinitely. If non-participation and objectification are to be avoided, donor "conditions" on the uses to which material and financial assistance is applied need to be flexible and in accordance with what the people decide in dialogue with the interventionists, who, if they are attempting to facilitate a participatory process, ought to be deciphering problems "with" them. More importantly, the participants must at all times be in control of the process, always knowing that they can count on the assistance of the interventionists when they require, regardless of what it is that they decide to do with the support.

Educational Intervention as Change through a Process of Blending Ideas

NFE program intervention is there to change the situation prior to intervention. However, what changes, how it changes and for whom and why it changes are the crucial elements in the process. "Regeneration" and "reproduction" approaches to change are, perhaps, two extremes in their respective unadulterated form. A more integrated view, derived from these polar positions, could be referred to as a process of "re-creation" or "revitalization". "Intruding ideas" and "indigenous ideas" can be "blended" during the change process -- a process of change where the participants' comfort level, willingness and ability to integrate/rationalize the "intruding idea" dictates the pace of change that is deemed possible and acceptable. If the interventionists truly sought to learn about "indigenous ideas" in order to change him/herself and recognized the joint nature/mutuality of the change process, there would be less compulsion towards the need to enforce and control in the name of "teaching".

CHAPTER 5

A COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT: OXFAM AND BGKS IN INDIA

Context: The Community Health Project

Participating Organizations

Oxfam (India) Trust. Oxfam is a registered British charitable organization. Oxfam's main objective, as outlined in its Memorandum of Association (Field Director's Handbook, 1985, p. 1), is "The relief of poverty, distress and suffering in every part of the world without regard to political and religious beliefs."

The original Oxford Committee for Famine Relief was set up in 1942, consisting of a small group of Oxford citizens who sent help to hungry children in Nazi-occupied Greece. After the war ended the Committee continued to raise money to send help to the victims of disaster in Europe. Later, they began to be more concerned with the wider needs of the rest of the world like the refugees after the division of Palestine and the famine that followed the Congo's independence. Soon the organization came to tackle not only temporary relief needs arising out of disasters, but also long term rehabilitation and development projects. As development projects became more important, the name of the organization was shortened in 1965 to OXFAM in order to demonstrate that famine relief was no longer its only activity.

Oxfam has identified three key objectives in its work (Field Director's Handbook, 1985):

(a) To fund and support small-scale development programs in certain priority areas (geographic and functional) which will enable the poor -- as far as possible -- to provide for their own needs, to obtain social justice and to secure their basic human rights.

(b) To fund and support humanitarian welfare work among deprived people in certain priority areas.

(c) To fund, plan and, where necessary, operate an effective relief response to those disasters identified as requiring Oxfam's assistance.

More importantly, according to "The Field Director's Handbook" (p. 1), Oxfam is trying to do something more: namely, to influence the process of development in such a way that the poorest are enabled to take charge of their own lives and to mount their own initiatives in the improvement of lives. Thus, the main objective is to try and end bias against the poor in the development process by bringing decision-making and implementation to the poor instead of letting it remain in the hands of politicians and development professionals.

Consequently, Oxfam is not just concerned with material improvement through rural or urban production schemes or health programs but also with the manner in which material change is organized, i.e., with the social institutions and organizations that accompany these programs. In this regard, as far as Oxfam in India is concerned (Oxfam in Orissa, promotional pamphlet, p. 2), "it is committed to an involvement in development which is non-violent, non-party political, secular, but supportive of diversity of Indian cultural traditions, and which promotes the values of equality and democracy. This involvement should give priority to the interests and rights of women, children and other disadvantaged groups of society." Oxfam projects try to ensure that the poorest not only have more and gain control of a fair share of the world's resources but that the poor can be more in terms of self-confidence, ability to manage their own future, and in improving their status in society at large (Field Director's Handbook, p. 1).

Oxfam's work in India began in a small way, when there was a need for emergency supplies during the Bihar (state in eastern India) famine in 1951. After that crisis, Oxfam assistance was sought in other projects, mainly in the areas of health, family planning, technical training, and relief work. By the end of the 60s, they were responding to the needs of people in almost every state in India. Today, there are seven regional offices around the country and one co-ordination office in Delhi (Oxfam India, Annual Report, 1990-91).

Oxfam's activities in Orissa, a state in eastern India, initially started in the early 1950s in the Dhenkanal District. In November, 1976, the Oxfam West Orissa Program (OXWORP), an operational drought relief and development initiative was founded and continued up to mid 1982. The office at the state capital, Bhubaneshwar, was established in 1983 and is responsible for all Oxfam activities in Orissa. According to the Regional Representative in the Orissa office, health is a particularly important priority area because the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is the highest in this state (via-a-vis the rest of India) along with rates of leprosy and malaria. The other focus area is drought relief, given the prevalence of drought in this region. However, it is the long-term mitigation of drought that is emphasized in this regard. Priority groups include the focus on tribals (indigenous people of the region), as the presence of tribals is 22 percent higher than the national average.

Oxfam India and Oxfam Orissa follow an operational strategy that seeks to provide local self-help groups with funding and non-funding support on (a) development issues related to health, education, employment, agriculture, forests, gender, social organization and (b) disaster relief and rehabilitation. Oxfam India encourages this approach in the belief that it fosters local leadership and enables people to take control of their own lives.

Furthermore, learning from the people and project partners is as critical to Oxfam as the assistance it extends. It is in this capacity that Oxfam Orissa got together with a "people's organization", Bapuji Gramya Kalyan Samaj (BGKS), to assist with a Community Health Project that commenced in 1990.

Bapuji Gramya Kalyan Samaj (BGKS). BGKS is a secular and non-party-political "people's organization". The schedule castes (SC) and schedule tribes (ST), primarily people of the Saora tribe of Mohana Block (in the Ganjam district of Orissa), have created this organization to address their own development concerns. Almost two thirds of the people in the organization are from STs (constitutionally recognized "indigenous peoples" for purposes of affirmative action), while the remaining third are SC (unfavoured castes in the Hindu caste system who are a constitutionally recognized "persecuted group" for purposes of affirmative action).

In 1982, two development activists who were local individuals from the nearby (to Mohana) township of Berhampur, of their own volition, came to the Mohana Block and attempted to start adult education programs adopting Paulo Freire's method of praxis. By taking words from the daily vocabulary of the people and discussing their problems as they related to the socio-economic context that they were imbedded in, people gradually began to see the need to solve their own problems in their own ways. It soon became evident to them that in order for them to be able to address their concerns, they would have to organize and take collective action. And that is how the first village committees came into existence.

Initially starting in just 15 village centers, the two activists were able to soon expand their adult education for social organization activity to some 60 centers. This process continued for about two years and as people took small decisions to improve their own lives through collective action like construction of roads and cleaning wells and streets, they realized that if they registered a formal organization, they could better deal with the problems that had a lot to do with the inequities and injustices of the political-administrative-social system that they were imbedded in. BGKS was formally registered as a society in 1984. The organization now has a membership of over 55,000 people and 261 villages of the 300 villages that constitute the Mohana Block. Meanwhile, the development activists registered their own organization as the People's Rural Educational Movement (PREM), also in 1984. Since then, it has encouraged the formation of some 25 people's organizations in the region, of which BGKS is but one such people's organization. PREM still provides funding and non-funding support for BGKS activities and is primarily responsible for the participatory philosophy that guides this organization today.

The mission of BGKS is to give rural people a voice that the last forty years of national development has denied them. Their opinions were never sought for policy making at the state level and these policies were generally imposed on them. BGKS seeks to provide a forum through which these marginalized people regain a voice in terms of having an impact on decisions that affect their lives and on the administration and governance of the country of which they are a neglected and exploited part. BGKS seeks to provide an education that creates awareness and fosters the growth of necessary talents and skills in its membership with the view to create a more just and equal society of people that believe and function in the spirit of truth, justice, love and peace (BGKS Project Proposal to Oxfam, 1990).

The specific objectives of the organization can be categorized in the following manner (Community Health Project, Oxfam Progress Report, For 1992):

Systemic Change

(1) To create an interest, motivation and socio-political awareness in people, irrespective of caste, religion, language and sex, in order to lobby the Public Distribution System (PDS) to render social services to the poor, weak, landless agricultural laborers for their socio-economic development.

(2) To promote new socio-cultural activities like collective village grain banks, seed banks, savings and credit banks etc., in order to promote a new culture that will counter the exploitative credit system of the village run by the landlord-money lender-shop keeper trio.

(3) To cooperate with the government in executing relevant and meaningful programs and projects in the targeted areas.

(4) To arrange government loans and housing programs for the poor and the needy where and whenever it is possible.

(5) To reclaim wasteland and arrange "pattas" (legal sanction) from the government for the landless agricultural laborers and promote cultivation.

(6) To create opportunities for rural employment and economic rehabilitation by promoting agriculture and social forestry and industrial, agricultural and landless labor cooperative societies.

Community Change

Local Organization and Collective Leadership

(1) To organize the village men, women, and youth under the Village "Sanghas" (together/groups), "Mahilla Sanghas" (women's groups) and youth organizations and to promote these groups in order to create a strong, dynamic, active and continuous people's organization at the Block level.

(2) To evolve socio-economic and educational programs for girl children and women that so that they may be better able to participate in the development process of the village and the community.

(3) To encourage village youth and women to become active participants in the socio-political process of the village.

(4) To make village organizations active and autonomous and promote people's participation in democratic institutions, as well as in the political process of the nation.

People's Education

(1) To promote a village and community health system that is based on people's knowledge and experience and uses locally available resources which are affordable, accessible and available to the people.

(2) To evolve a system of people's education by promoting nonformal adult and children's education and vocational education that is based on local experiences, knowledge and economic opportunities which will provide employment in the village and strengthen village life.

The organization consists of 261 elected village committees, with equal participation of men and women. These villages are then clustered to form a panchayat and there are some 16 of these panchayats, each with its own elected panchayat committee. This is the regional level representative body. Men and women have equal participation at this level. Four elected representatives from each of these panchayat committees become members of the Governing Body of BGKS. The Governing Body, with its elected President, Secretary and Treasurer is responsible for making policy and program decisions in accordance with the wishes of its membership. An Organizer, usually trained by PREM and a member of the same or a related community, acts as a consultant, program co-ordinator and guide who is directly responsible to the Board (Oxfam Tour Report, November, 1992). The decision-making process of this body is discussed in more detail by an interviewee, later in this analysis.

Programs being undertaken by BGKS include the areas of health, social forestry, education, organization, savings and credit and school health programs. Funding support is provided by the membership of the organization and for specific projects, such as the Community Health Project, by private voluntary organizations like Oxfam and PREM.

Rural Participants: The Members of BGKS

BGKS membership includes people of the Saora tribe, Harijans or schedule caste people and a few people from the Kondh tribe. However, the large majority belong to the Saora tribe and the following description pertains to this group. It should also be noted here that the Saoras cannot be viewed as a monolithic cultural group and that there are numerous cultural variations among the different types of Saoras. What is discussed here are some broad generalizations for the purpose of developing a "pertinent" description of the status of some of the rural participants that field agents work with in projects such as the Community Health Project. What follows is a description of their habitat and livelihood, their medicinal practices, current literacy status and educational practice. A brief picture of the health status and problematic health issues in the BGKS community is provided in the following section.

Habitat and livelihood. The Saoras are one of the oldest known tribes of India and are seen to be among the indigenous inhabitants of India, prior to the Indo-Aryan invasions of the period 3500-2500 BC (Patnaik, 1989, p. 3). Unable to withstand the Indo-Aryan invasions, they were gradually driven from the fertile plains and river valleys into more remote and inaccessible areas in thick forests and hills, mainly along the eastern ghats (hilly, tropical forest ranges spanning the eastern coast of India). Saora villages are often situated in the most inaccessible areas and in many cases lie hidden in the forest clad hills, making it very difficult to reach them, except through zig-zag hill paths. They build their houses on the slopes or on the foothills and generally live in small villages, the average size varying from a few households to around 200 households. Whether big or small, the Saora villages have been long established in their present sites.

According to Patnaik (1989, p. 11), their economic livelihood, technology and food cultivation habits suggest that they are among the most primitive of tribal groups in the state of Orissa. Their economic life hinges mostly on cultivation, along with hunting and food gathering pursuits. The 1981 census states that almost 49.5 percent of Saoras work as agricultural labor, 41.2 percent as cultivators, while the remaining are in livestock rearing, fishing, forestry and hunting (Patnaik, 1989, p. 13).

The distribution of productive land, according to a UNICEF report (1991, p. 41), is one of the many indicators of the prevailing inequity in the ownership of assets and the incidence of poverty in the state. 75 percent of all land holdings are less than 2 hectares (smallest category of holding) while operating on a total area of 38 percent of operated area and ". . . these smaller holdings are becoming increasingly non-viable", while 7 percent have land holdings of 7-10 hectares while operating on a total area of 30 percent of land currently being operated. According to the same report, these inequities are accentuated in districts with a large percentage of SC and ST populations.

The Saoras carry on cultivation in four types of land -- homestead land around their houses, terraced land, swiddens on the hill slopes and swiddens on the hill tops. While the latter three types of land are normally used to cultivate the staples which include various lentils, paddy and oil seeds and cash crops like ginger and turmeric, the gardens are used to grow maize, tobacco, chilly, vegetables like pumpkin, beans, brinjal and gourd and fruits like papaya, banana and oranges. BGKS communal gardens also grow cash crops like cashew nuts and pineapples which supplement the income generated from the sale of surplus staple crops. In fact, these cash crops often generate a greater income than the staples. With the desiccation and shrinkage of forests, cultivation has increased in importance as an economic activity while hunting and food gathering pursuits are becoming less viable.

As far as technology is concerned, the Saoras use bows and arrows, axes and knives and locally manufactured guns for hunting. They have bullock driven ploughs; a leveler and a spade are used in wet cultivation while a digging stick and a hoe are used in shifting cultivation.

Most of the agricultural activities of the Saoras are carried out on a communal basis. According to this system called "Ansir", the villagers work on one another's land on the basis of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation. However, members of the community do own their own plots of land which are of varying sizes. Payment of wages by wealthier Saoras is a recent phenomenon that has infiltrated the traditional "Ansir" system, given the increasing contact with the modern system.

Literacy status, educational practice and medicinal practice. According to the 1981 census, Saora literacy rates are at 14.47 percent as compared with 13.96 percent for the total tribal population and 34.23 percent for the entire population of the state (UNICEF, 1991, p. 94). Primary school facilities are available to 50 percent of rural habitations in the state but 21 percent of such habitations do not have such a facility within a distance of 2 kms. Only 40 percent of SC and 36 percent of ST girls are enrolled in primary classes, while anywhere from 52 percent to 60 percent of SC and ST children drop out of school by the time they get to grade V (UNICEF, 1991, p. 100).

However, Saora children learn relevant skills and values by assisting their parents in all the occupations and participating in tribal life from a very young age. Small boys can skin a buffalo, climb up to high altitudes in the hills, bring water, tend cattle and even plough. Small girls take care of children, help their mothers in cooking, plastering houses, preparing beads, necklaces and spinning. Older people have a respected status and impart tribal knowledge, values, customs and beliefs through an oral tradition that connects the present to the ancestors and the past (Patnaik, 1989).

As a spiritual people, the Saoras believe that suffering and ill health are mainly due to the wrath of different Gods and the evil spirits. The traditional medicine man/woman utilizes incantations, rituals and herbs to cure various health problems. Cures for malaria, treatment for broken bones, preventative interventions for birth control and birth spacing are some examples of where traditional medicine is known to be very effective in terms of achieving a desired result (Patnaik, 1989).

The Community Health Project: A BGKS-OXFAM Initiative

In 1989, meningitis broke out in the BGKS villages and in Mohana Block in general and many children died as a result of this epidemic. BGKS tried to publicize this situation at the state level in order to enlighten the Public Health Commission (PHC). However, the government did not take any initiative on the matter and, more astonishingly, denied that there were any cases of meningitis in the area. BGKS then approached Oxfam and the Director of Oxfam visited and stayed in the villages, gradually becoming a source of inspiration, as he began to organize health camps on the epidemic. There had never been any previous outbreak of meningitis and the impact was quite alarming. Oxfam then began to highlight the problem at the state and national level. At the same time Oxfam and BGKS decided to conduct a survey on the health and nutritional status of women and children in 1990. The survey demonstrated, among other things, a very poor nutritional status of children. This became the motivating factor in deciding to start a broader Community Health Project, with the assistance of Oxfam, to tackle various related health and nutritional issues.

The survey and discussions with the people revealed some of the following problems regarding the health situation of the community (BGKS Proposal to Oxfam for the Community Health Project, October, 1990; Oxfam Tour Report, November, 1992):

(1) Commonly prevalent diseases and health problems included malaria, diarrhea, brain fever, various viral diseases, and diseases and problems related to pregnancy, child birth and weaning practices. A few cases of TB and leprosy were also discovered.

(2) Children were found to be severely malnourished, especially those in the weaning period. The Infant Mortality Rate (1 to 5 years) was much higher than the mortality rates of other age groups. Only 20 percent of the under 5 years population in the community had been immunized.

(3) Governmental medical services were not being provided adequately, if at all. While the remoteness and inhospitable geography of the habitation of the community was partially to blame for this, neglect of marginalized SC and ST communities were also seen to be an important contributing factor in this regard.

(4) Allopathic medicine had found its way into the health care provisions of the community. Expensive, unaffordable and sometimes spurious drugs were being pedaled by medical quacks for profit. Given the immediate effect of some of these drugs, traditional herbally based treatment was being ignored in the process. This was having the following effects on the community:

(a) People were not looking at the often, harmful side-effects of allopathic drugs (especially when spurious drugs were being sold); (b) People were incurring great financial debt and dependency to buy these expensive drugs; (c) Sometimes, treatment would be delayed till it was "affordable" to buy a drug (even though locally available herbal medicine was available), thereby prolonging illness; (d) People were having to travel great distances to receive medical attention at overburdened public hospitals; (e) People were turning away from their traditional "herbally based" cures and this was putting the traditional practice of medicine and a community institution at risk -- a self-sustaining, affordable, locally available and self-reliant form of medicine that had been effective for many generations was fast losing its place in the life and welfare of the community.

(5) People were not aware of their health rights and were often engaging in practices that were very likely to be detrimental to their health.

Consequently, the Community Health Project was initiated to address these concerns. The three major objectives of the project were as follows:

(1) To create a critical awareness of the health issues by looking at problems of "access" and problems of "current community practice";

(2) To organize people to assert their rights by getting the public health system to respond to their health needs;

(3) To revive traditional health knowledge and practice as an accessible, sustainable and viable system of health care.

These objectives were to be met through some of the following NFE initiatives (BGKS Proposal to Oxfam for the Community Health Project, October, 1990) :

(1) Creating critical awareness among the target population about the root causes of the prevalence of ill-health as it relates to the socio-economic-political-cultural disparities and exploitation.

(2) Organizing people by making them aware of their health and related rights so that they may assert themselves against the apathy of the public health system and the PDS at large by making contact with the PHC and collaborating with them to initiate needed health programs, such as the immunization program.

(3) To create critical awareness about and take action to alleviate the prevalent diseases and malnutrition in the community through various educational campaigns such as the "Immunization campaign" , "O.R.T campaign", "Keep the Village Clean" campaign, "Malaria Eradication campaign", "Protect the Environment campaign", "Drinking Water campaign", "Children's Rights campaign", "Kitchen & Herbal Garden campaign", "Eat More Greens campaign" and the "campaign for the Drainage System".

(4) To mobilize people on health issues through their participation in a health survey and personal health passport.

(5) To encourage "Vaidyas" (village medicine practitioners) to come together, discuss and learn and document their knowledge of health problems, their treatment and the properties and effects of various herbs. To encourage this traditional medicinal practice through the various campaigns, such as the herbal garden campaign and critical discussion of the kind of allopathic medicine entering the community and to emphasize the use of allopathy as a cure of final recourse. Similarly, to train "dhais" (mid-wives) in the provision of improved natal care through the inclusion of scientifically based practices.

(6) Creation of a health education center which would: (a) train village level health workers; (b) conduct block level meetings of women's groups; (c) give health information (charts, booklets) which promote relevant health practices from all systems of medicine; (d) document the on-going survey; (e) conduct seminars and workshops; (f) promote liaison activities with the government and the health system.

Campaigns were seen to be the most essential element of this NFE initiative. According to the Project Proposal submitted by BGKS to Oxfam (October, 1990, p. 17), ". . . there is need for constant education for sustaining health awareness. Hence, time-bound campaigns involving the total population is a must. These campaigns are possible among the organized villages and even among non-organized villages. These campaigns will promote organization and build enthusiasm necessary for people to take their own initiative to begin to address health and related concerns." Campaign activities were to include various audio-visual media like folk art/drama/puppetry, visual mediums like posters, stickers and exhibitions, and various forums for learning like work camps, competitions, demonstrations, house-to-house campaigning and more "formal" study classes.

According to a progress report by Oxfam in late 1992, 110 villages consisting of 2401 families and 12,775 people are part of the Community Health Project. Women's organizations and youth and children's organizations from the various BGKS communities are all active participants and provide funding for the project.

The Change Agents: Research Participants

The participants in the study were change agents from Oxfam and BGKS. The Regional Representative and two Project Officers from Oxfam were interviewees. The following points can be made about these individuals:

-- all of them had a formal education up to the Master's level (Social Sciences/Humanities);

-- all three had worked in the area of rural development for at least five years;

-- they had field-based familiarity/contact with the particular Community Health Project being undertaken with BGKS;

-- also had various experiences with several other similar projects in rural Orissa; and

-- all these participants were in the age group of thirty to forty years, while one was female.

Participants from BGKS included the Organizer, an Educational Supervisor and a Socio-political Educator/Facilitator. The following points can be made about these individuals:

-- all these interviewees had a formal education up to the Bachelor's and/or Master's level (Social Sciences/Humanities/Education);

-- the Organizer started with PREM as a member and Organizer of the cultural teams that originally helped mobilize the people to form BGKS and subsequently joined the organization (BGKS) himself. The Socio-political Educator/Facilitator has been with BGKS for some five years now, while the Educational Supervisor is currently a member of PREM, providing educational training and planning support to BGKS for their various educational initiatives;

-- all these participants are tribals from this region and have returned to help their own people, after acquiring a formal education in an urban environment. All these interviewees are actively involved in the Community Health Project in their respective capacities. These participants were all male and in the age group of thirty to forty years.

Change Agent Perspectives on Participatory NFE: Emergent Themes

Unlike the Nepalese case study, where "change agent perspectives of participation in NFE programs" were presented, this case study is presented as "change agent perspectives on participatory NFE". This is because interviewees/change agents from SAVE, Nepal, tended to view participation as an "input" or a "means" that could be injected into preconceived/existing NFE programs. On the other hand, interviewees/change agents in this case study tended to speak of participation more as a "process" and a desired "end" state that they were striving to cultivate through a NFE process. Analysis of the interview data suggests the following related thematic areas that assist reflection on the nature and the desirability of participatory NFE: (1) Participatory NFE: Breaking Mental Frames and Taking Collective Action for Rural Change; and (2) Participatory NFE: A Process of Developing Participatory Relationships.

Participatory NFE: Breaking Mental Frames and Taking Collective Action for Rural Change

The development problem: The nature of dependence, control and mental frames.

The development problem is conceived in terms of rural individuals and communities who have been made "dependent" (induced mental and material dependence) by a social structure and vested interests that gain power (material, political, religious, administrative/planning control), at the expense of these individuals and their communities, through the promotion of dependency. Dependence often stifles the initiative of the rural people to take control of their own problems -- a mental frame that suggests resignation to one's lot in life. However, this "frame of mind" could be of a "fatalistic disposition" as was suggested by some interviewees or it could be explained in terms of more strategic reasons (effectiveness/instrumentally related). For example, people might fear the consequences of independence or simply find loss of independence a simpler way to gain material, given their dire situation of material deprivation.

Dependence is created in a multiplicity of ways. For example, urban services, such as public health services, are promised and are often not provided at all or if there is a provision, it is inadequate or expensive (if provided by the private drug industry, for example). Partial intrusion of such services dislocates and often extinguishes locally based indigenous practices, such as traditional herbal medicinal practice, which is accessible, affordable and promotes self-reliance.

Consequently, people "wait" for the delivery of an inequitable, unjust and inefficient externally-based service, while doing little to confront this injustice or to revive their own medicinal practice -- a mental frame that encourages abdication from the responsibility to take control of their health problems through demanding a voice in the extra-communal system and/or the revival of self-reliant and age-old traditions of such services.

An interviewee describes how this dependency on and control by the PDS and the PHC can lead to undesirable consequences for people's health in terms of the injustice and inadequacy of the system in meeting their needs and the inertia of dependent rural people.

> People do not have control of their own health because they are waiting for the PHC to do something for them or they are waiting for expensive allopathic drugs from the drug industry. When meningitis broke out, the government denied it was a problem. Maybe they know that these are small people living in the remote area -- so, there is no need to respond. And even if people go to the health outposts, what kind of facility do they get ? Then, they are waiting for profiteering quacks from the drug industry, who many times sell them spurious drugs for alot of money and then they become economically dependent too. And these are poor people, so they go into debt quite often or they will not take medicine for a problem till they can

> find the money to buy this expensive allopathic medicine. And like this they are getting more sick.
>
> So, if the people don't organize and take control of their health by demanding public services and if they don't realize that they have a traditional medicine which has been working quite effectively for generations -- their own herbal medicines that are right at their doorstep, that they should use and not let it die away because allopathic gives quick remedies, then they will depend on an outside system that still does not recognize them -- it only gives them false promises -- and then also kill their own traditional system which can be in their control, then this will only be bad for their health.

Another interviewee cites a different example to demonstrate how the political-administrative system perpetuates dependence and control.

> This NGO is now undergoing a lot of pressure because it has attacked alot of vested interests, especially the PDS program. It's about supply of essential commodities to tribal sub-plan areas like rice, sugar and kerosene at subsidized rates. It is due them and is their legitimate right but what happens is that the wrong people take up the retailership. From corrupt officials, to petty traders and retailers, there is leakage of these commodities to other markets. What the NGO is saying is that the village committee should implement the PDS. Once this was allowed and the village committees took over this function, this whole nexus got affected. Public Works/Construction is another area for petty crimes and corruption. A contract to build a bridge or whatever is given to a contractor who gives the decision making politician a pay-off from the allocated contract public moneys -- so they were hitting at these things, saying that these matters should be managed and taken up by the village committees.
>
> As village committees were taking up these functions, these people were getting hit hard. So, the MLA (member of the legislative assembly) in that area tried to implicate the organization on some trumped up charges or some such. A politically motivated commission of inquiry was set up but when I visited to monitor the program, I found that the program was being effectively executed by the village committee, essential commodities were coming to the villages and were available at the right rates. However, the administrative structure still bothers them. For instance, they will go to the Block headquarters to get PDS supply and the Supply Inspector will harass them by making them wait around for a really long time.

Similarly, landlords and money lenders often promote dependence and control by becoming obstacles to any process that promotes independence and self-reliance.

> When it comes to bigger issues like land and people decide that all the landless people should apply for land and they start applying and collectively they go to the tehsildar or the revenue inspector -- and they have some quarrel with these people and see that it is not giving result, they may withdraw or if there is some other big landed person in the area who wants the land for plantation cultivation, he may poke his nose inside and he may try to create trouble and divide people. Another example -- people want to create an alternative credit system in the village -- they want to collect a certain fund and use it as a revolving fund. Initially it is working and all may be involved but when the money lender sees that it is hampering his business, he may start playing his games -- he may buy off people, waive his loans and things like that.

Religious orders are also known to reinforce a welfare mentality of dependence in order to encourage and maintain "religious conversion". These interventionists often cooperate with the existing political and administrative power or authority in the region (or coopt the local community elite) and, consequently, do nothing to uncover and deal with the controversial forces of exploitation that hinder self-reliance and community initiative to deal with the problems of poverty.

> They do not trust us because their religious leaders have told them to stick to their religion and that we are communists because we are talking about equality and secularism and things like that. And the people, they cannot be blamed -- they are poor and once they are converted then they know they are getting some things from the Baptist people, so they want to remain like that.
>
> This man is an adivasi (ST) but he has joined up and is supported by the Christians and the government officers who want him to break what the people are trying to do. In the election for the panchayat committee, he kidnapped an opposition member from our organization and that is why he managed to win the election like that. He can pressure the people because he has powerful support from the local government and the religious people outside the community and inside.

Multilateral aid agencies, like the World Bank, interested in assimilating these communities into the modern economic mainstream on their terms, also perpetuate dependence and control. As one interviewee put it:

> Nowadays the word participation has almost become a cliche, a much used and abused word that is used loosely. In theory it is found in all project proposals, be it the World Bank or a grass-roots NGO. The words participation and community involvement and all that will be there. When a lot of the larger projects use the term, like World Bank projects, what actually happens ? Planners and so-called policy experts do all the planning, then when it comes to implementation, they want participation. But unless the people who it is going to effect and who it is supposed to help really own the process, there will be problems because the planners are manipulating the process for their own ends.

This interviewee went on to explain how, unwittingly, even "well-meaning" voluntary agencies (NGOs) fall into the trap of planning and running projects *for* the people, thereby failing to give the people control and independence vis-a-vis an intervention for change. Consequently, very often the results are contrary to what the interventionist's "expected or wanted".

> The organization had a development support team that consisted mainly of professionals in agriculture, agricultural engineering and management -- these were committed people who lived in the rural areas that they worked in. They were primarily concerned about issues of increasing agricultural production, land and water management. They had good techno-managerial skills and were sound in this respect. What they lacked was the social perspective. They were committed fellows and they insisted that they could manage the project alone. They started building a better irrigation system on tribal land for this focus group. The value of the land started to appreciate because of the opportunity that this new system

> afforded in terms of an irrigation for a second crop that was otherwise not possible in these valleys prior to the introduction of these new irrigation divergence mechanisms they were creating. With this, the focus group started to mortgage its land away for economic gain and this is a basic problem concerning their development that should be avoided at all costs. They had provided a low cost innovative structure for the people but what was the use if the land ended up being transferred from the focus group.
>
> In the poultry program, it was different. We were introducing layer birds which are different from the "desi moorgis" (local fowl) they were used to. We were also introducing them on a larger scale than they were used to -- 200 bird units which would mean a loan of almost 20,000 Rs. Lot of people did not wish to participate because of the large loan amount -- usually loans are around the 1000/2000 Rs. area. This whole activity was planned by us but with consultation with the people -- definitely, consultation was there but decision making was in our hands -- project people, me and IGP (income generation plan) specialists and a poultry consultant. Initially, village leaders were consulted but they were not really representative of the focus group -- we did not consult the small groups. The project ended with only three beneficiaries, of which two did alright and the third could not make the loan payments. The project was not replicated, as far as I know, and in terms of management time and staff, three of us were involved for three beneficiaries and we struggled quite a bit with it.

The perpetuation of dependence and control with the view to meet the agendas of these various interventionists are responsible for encouraging rural "recipients" to adopt, as one interviewee put it, a "stagnant position" where their "minds are framed" in a way that needs to be "broken".

> Because of age long exploitation and social disguise they have been placed into situations where they accept whatever comes into their lives. This is part of our lives and that is how they treat it. They are beyond fatalism because they believe whatever they are told because culturally and socially they have been told and made to believe that you, as untouchables or tribals, are not supposed to do this and this and this and they accept it. They don't just accept it as their fate, they believe that they are supposed to do what they have been told by other groups so, in a way they are beyond fatalism.
>
> My experience with the community suggests that the people have got used to a system where their minds are framed with these things. They cannot break these frames and think beyond. They think that this is the way it is going to be and this is our fate -- very fatalistic -- and they are unable to realize their own strength. They are in a stagnant position as such -- so, in order to break this frame, it is necessary to have a participatory education that makes them responsible for dealing with their problems.

Interviewees tried to shed additional light on why this "stagnant position" might persist:

> When people do not have the basic material things to survive, they are naturally happy and willing to receive things that are coming from outside. So, when a religious donor gives them things to try to convert them, they take it and it looks like they are participating. Or like in a social forestry program where a donor gives some money and there is a patch of land, then people are very happy and willing to receive the benefit that is coming from outside, so they come forward. They go and

> start cleaning the place, fencing it, planting the area, all these things -- this sort of hard work they can give -- they can do this, they are working people. And then you can take nice photographs and get immediate satisfaction that way.
>
> They are afraid of the government officials, money lenders and landlords and what they will do to them. And then they know it is easier to just get something from the donors who come and just give some things to them.

Participatory NFE as empowerment: Breaking the mental frames of dependence and organizing for collective action. Participatory NFE seeks to break "mental frames of dependence" by helping people understand the dynamics of "dependence" and "control" and its tangible influence on their lives. Consequently, participatory NFE seeks to educate people by helping them regain their lost sense of independence and initiative. The focus is on addressing an inner mental state as the fundamental shaper of depression and/or the possibility of renewal in rural society, rather than the more obvious and related condition of alleviating material deprivation by any means (even if the means promote dependency and control).

The recognition of such "dependence" and "control" and, conversely, recognition of their own potential, provides the motivation for individuals and their communities to take control over their process of individual and social change. This motivation finds concrete expression in the formation of community-based social organizations that become the avenue through which individuals and their community take their own decisions to effect change and battle unacceptable conditions.

As an interviewee explained:

> Basic thing is that cultural change takes place and that is more important. Change in attitude, approach and thinking process. The feelings of rights, responsibility and duties -- the internalization of these aspects and acting on it -- this is the most important part for participatory education and rural change.
>
> People should develop their own consciousness and livelihood -- that is our intent and not to just talk about material and finance only and tell them what to do about those things. According to me, this process of freeing the conscience from such frames and blocks is empowerment; empowerment because people now don't feel that there is something very great about the whole thing and that it's from outside -- they feel that they have been doing all this.

Another interviewee explained the pedagogy of this educational process, emphasizing the importance of learning through experientially based (contextually relevant) reflection to analyze the problems and taking action (through collective organization and small projects), an educational process the purpose of which is to change an unacceptable condition or circumstance.

> We adopted Paulo Freire's method of action-reflection. People would gather after work every day in the evening and discuss their problems which included a whole

> lot of things -- economic life, social life, exploitations, political pressure -- things like that. People would come together and discuss issues.
>
> A word from their own daily vocabulary would prompt the discussion of their problems. When people discuss their own problem, they feel the need of solving their own problem. When they feel the need to solve their own problem to improve their daily life, they also know the need to get together to solve these problems -- they realize this -- and they get more united and take collective decision to solve the problem. That's how the formation of village committee came into being and once these committees were formed and people started discussing their own problems they also started taking small decisions to solve their own problems and in the meantime the adult education process tried to give the people a socio-economic sense of their situation.
>
> And this program continued for two years and people took some small decisions to improve their own lives and did this collectively, like construction of roads, cleaning wells and streets, those kind of small things. They realized that if they form organization and continued that way, they could solve some of their problems and so they formally registered their society, BGKS, in 1984.

The same interviewee describes how this participatory NFE process worked with respect to the NFE Health Project, after providing a brief outline of the rationale behind the intervention.

> We are not trying to do away with allopathic medicine but what we are trying to say is that this should be our last resort because if you look at the economic life of the people they cannot afford it. Second, the quacks are not qualified to diagnose and treat properly and third, the drugs that are sold in rural areas are often spurious or of poor quality or rejected material from the urban centers. Of course, in extreme cases of operations you cannot depend on vaidyas -- you have to go to the hospital and see the doctor. We want to use both but first of all people should try and use their own and if they cannot cure then they can refer it to a hospital.
>
> So, first we, that is vaidyas us organizers and teachers, go to the general village meeting and make traditional medicine and its usefulness as a point on the agenda -- discuss with the people -- create awareness by talking about the exploitation by quacks and the difficulty of going all the way to the hospital in Mohana and why and how they could invest their faith in their own medicine which is available at the village on their doorstep. We discussed their side-effects to help them realize that this medicine can be quite dangerous and in comparison to that, traditional medicine was harmless. People need not spend much money on their own health and can take control of their own health and they can even make their own medicine and they can put their faith in it because during ancient times we did not have allopathic system -- these things we reflect on and question.

While this process of reflection is set in motion at the village level, the Block level organization of BGKS also initiates a process of reflection, discussion and a decision to participate or not to participate in collective action. The Organizer for BGKS discussed this process as follows:

> Whatever campaign we want to take, we first discuss with the governing body where we discuss the positives, negatives, etc. and try to see the issue in different ways. When we agree with the idea of such a campaign, like the health one, then we discuss the strategy like who is the best group to involve -- women or children etc. Once the governing body decides this, I communicate it to the village workers

> and other organizers. The secretary of the governing body writes a letter to each village organization and plus the governing body members are from the villages so they go back and pass the information.
>
> Then at the village level, the whole village will engage in a discussion on the campaign -- even if a village of forty family. The leader who represents the people at the governing body, the animator or NFE teacher facilitates the discussion and the context in which the governing body reached its suggested course of action is provided by these people to the villagers. People then get to suggest their own alternatives if they differ at the village level, or at the regional committee level and this will go back to the center for the next months meeting. Regional reports are read and discussed thoroughly in the governing body meetings. Those villages that agree with the original position or the modified position addressing their concern, continue with the initiative. Those that don't agree at all, follow their own course of action or don't take any action.

He went on to describe the nature of some of these campaigns that were undertaken by members of the organization who had decided to act on the situation in the chosen manner, such as the "meningitis campaign", the "one papaya for one child campaign" or the "cleaning campaign". It may be noted here, that while the former campaign is an example of collective action aimed at the extra-communal system/environment, the latter campaign is aimed at the intra-communal system (BGKS membership).

> When meningitis broke out we organized a children's peace march at the block level. Children held placards which said, "Health is our Right" or "Help us Live" etc. -- slogans. This helped the government people and the villagers in general to think about the problem. And the PHC people, they don't like to go to remote areas in the mountains where these villages are -- so their doctors started to think when these children came to them with their problem. And we followed this activity up with writing to the high officers in the government, district medical officers.
>
> One papaya for one child campaign was started because we felt that our people had nutritious food but did not use it well because they did not know about it like "sabjis" (vegetables) and papaya -- especially pregnant mothers and Saora people did not know and use papaya for this. So, we used our school program to popularize this idea. Teachers motivated the children to get involved and things went well. Now a lot of papaya is grown and especially pregnant women have started eating them.
>
> We also used a cleaning program in the school where children cleaned parts of the village on a regular basis and this encouraged the adults to get involved and then we supplemented this with discussions on the general importance of sanitation. What happens if the surroundings are not clean, what sort of diseases they could get. And we would take examples from the village -- if someone has scabies or TB, we discuss those health problems and their relationship to cleanliness -- and now days cleaning has become a very important part of village life. First they were not serious about garbage, water logging or keeping cows very close to their house. Now they are.

Participatory NFE and rural change. Participatory NFE consequently affects individual and social change in the following inter-related manner: (1) breaks the cycle of individual/community mental dependence -- accepting someone else's definition of you and your capabilities and what you can and can't achieve -- thereby creating independent, self-confident individuals/communities who actively make decisions and take actions for their betterment; (2) breaks the social-economic-political-cultural structures that promote "control" and "dependence" (where the system dictates when and how your community will be affected) through the formation of community based social organizations that channel the increasing sense of individual independence, giving it concrete shape through tangible actions that begin to shape these systems of "dependence" and "control" towards meeting the needs of the community; and (3) promotes community based self-help initiatives that strengthen the above mentioned tendencies (intra-communal forms of dependence and control are also addressed, eg., issues of male-female participation or children's participation).

As interviewees point out, these changes are possible but not without problems. The following statements suggest difficulties pertaining to the process of trying to get people to think differently about solving their problems.

> People have got used to exploiters coming and offering things of immediate utility to them -- exploiters because they want to use material things to get people for their own religious or political cause. Or if they are simply giving things to them to help, then they are helping to develop dependence because people are not learning for themselves to take care of their own problems and to change their minds. So, to re-orient them educationally speaking, is a very difficult task. I have seen many people get frustrated and withdraw from the process. They switch over to the other approach.
>
> Participatory approach is difficult because people are not being given things -- they are being told that they have to do everything for themselves and that we will help them. People don't see some immediate outcomes and they have expectations because of their experience with these exploiters who give them things and also because they need some of these things badly.
>
> Ours is a long term process because we go and tell them that if they feel water is a problem then this is how they can take the following steps and get water from the government and that it was their right. Related to this practical idea we told them that it would be useful for them to learn to read and write so that they can get their rights like this for themselves.

Similarly, organizing the people for collective action is a difficult process given the resistance from vested interests, some of whom have been mentioned already as the perpetrators of dependence and control.

> When you participate in a democratic process, the experience is sometimes bitter and here, for example, the officers we deal with, don't have the same mentality. Each officer feels that he is the government. They know that through this process the people can control their own developmental activities, their own resources -- even what comes at the block level they can try and control - they can go and shout, organize dharna (protest), things like that. They can get things done and this bothers them because they may be found out and will lose control over them.

> People are not habituated to the participatory process because money lenders and politicians are not interested to organize the people because this would be problem for them and so they do not want to disturb this way. Landlords and money lenders are not happy with participatory education and try to make it difficult and disturb teachers who are doing this with the people.

Another interviewee, citing two examples, described how participatory NFE can work:

> In one case a group came and wanted to get involved with a water provision program for the people near Chilka area. We had been involved in lobbying and organizational pressure tactics for a tube well for the people for one and half years and this group was saying we will give you some well rings -- why don't you let us dig a well in your village ? This was a test for our work and approach -- a hard situation because people cannot resist the temptation of being given something for free. So we approached the community for reflection on this issue and said that if they wished to accept the well-rings from this group it was fine and that they would have to decide. If people accept you in the village then you can be there -- if not, better withdraw. Even though some people were tempted, the village council decided not to accept the offer because they had been working for so long on the PDS and were getting assurances after one year of postcard campaigns, dharnas and saying that they would take away water from government officials etc. plus water is a basic right that the government was mandated to ensure for them. And they refused that organization and said that we know how to get the water for ourselves.
>
> When a fishing village that we worked in boycotted a Parliamentary election in 1984, there was alot of pressure on individuals and the organization. We were being antagonized and even our life was being threatened by government people and political thugs. The very existence of the organization was being threatened by the politicians because they felt that these village people could not possibly boycott elections for demands concerning water, electrification and communication issues without the help of our organization. So, focus and pressure was on the organization. Because of this boycott, however, the village was eventually electrified, two ponds were made, some people were rehabilitated under a new Income Generation Plan -- this was truly inspirational for us.

An interviewee summed up what participatory education meant to him, as follows:

> Participatory education for me is, first, developing understanding of the problems. Like suppose somebody is trying to push something that the person thinks is good and beneficial for the community but initially the people don't understand. If it is put before the community and the community gets a chance to analyze it and then it understands, then it will be interested to get involved in it. Otherwise, what happens is that the person who is trying to give that good thing for the community will find it may not be good at all and if he pushes it, people will soon become against this thing. Participatory education first tries to develop understanding on the part of the people of the problem. And this may take lots of time. Secondly, their own decision and willingness to do something through organizing and participatory educators will help them with this one also. Once this is done and they are taking the decision, then they will be willing to do some work, share the responsibilities and bear the consequences, positive or negative. This is participatory education for me.

Participatory NFE: A Process of Developing Relationships

While the above thematic analysis illustrates the question of "what" participatory NFE is and what its intended purpose is (with some discussion pertaining to the question of "how" it operates), the following emergent theme deals with the process of "providing" a participatory NFE experience (the question of "how").

If "what" participatory NFE seeks to do is to give control of the change process back to rural participants in order to foster independent action, then the "process" or the question of "how" this education is imparted cannot propagate control and dependence by the change agents. Since notions of "control" and "dependence" are relational concepts, the question of "process" is primarily a question of "relationship".

The following themes deal with questions concerning "what" this process/relationship is, "why" it ought to be the way that is being suggested and "how" this process/relationship is developed.

Non-controlling relationships: Obvious problems, actors and spectators. An interviewee discussed the pivotal role of control in the relationship between change agents and participants in the intervention process and tried to explain why it was so important to ensure that participants have control over their change process.

> Most of the cases I find that when we intervene, we go with a certain frame that these are the problems and these are the ways we are going to work on these problems. So we go always with that framework but we hardly make people understand those ways and even if we go with our own ways they think in their own ways and we continue our ways. So I find that in most cases there is a lot of gap in the understanding of the people and the actors or agents. So, they don't accept these people as co-participants and always see them as outsiders who have come for their own purposes and will work for their own purpose and go away -- that is my experience. If you are going to go and prescribe something, then people are not going to have control over the situation and I have seen that this method does not work.
>
> Let people think of their problem, let people analyze their situation and let people have control over their situation because ultimately we are not concerned about the obvious problems -- obvious problems are the symptoms -- our main concern are the people. So, people must have the control -- they are the actors in the process.
>
> See, poverty is an obvious problem and we are seeing that people are obviously economically poor. Because people are poor -- if we are going to solve the problems of poverty without taking people into account by not letting them start to think and act on their poor situation -- then what ? Are we going to work in a vacuum -- is such a thing even possible ?
>
> We need to have control over our lives. We are all given some control but if that is taken away from you -- if you are dancing to the tune of somebody else then there is no meaning to having a life to your body because you don't have anything of your own, you don't have any vision, you don't have any choice -- whether you go for the better or for the worse. But if you have control, you have choices.

> Otherwise you are a spectator in your own life because you are living in somebody else's vision for you.

Or, as another participant suggested earlier on (see section on the "Development Problem and Mental Traps"), rural participants have been placed in a situation where they have not only been exploited in terms of their material well-being but they have also been "framed" into a "mental trap of subservience" that discourages them from taking the initiative to deal with their problems. The culture of the "induced negative self-image" is challenged by encouraging rural participants to engage in a process that puts them in control of their change process, thereby enabling a process of cultural change.

"Cultural change" is made evident by a "growth in confidence", "learning and preparedness", "self reliance" and then, logically, a better chance for "continuity of the change process", after the change agents have withdrawn -- all developments the change agents felt justified the need for a non-controlling relationship.

> This is important because it first of all enhances their thinking. Secondly, once they take the decision to do something, this gives them power and confidence. They feel very positive inside that we can do something by ourselves. They don't need somebody to come and be their savior or to save them. And once they take the decision and start doing something they learn lots of things -- like, for example, they decide to get a tube well from the block (administrative subdivision of the district) and they decide that this will be the committee that will go to the block. They may run 100 times to the block office but it is important that they do this because they learn. Once these people were so scared of the block office -- soon they realize that they can talk, demand, challenge and shout sometimes and they now know how the system works and how to approach it -- all these things are very useful for them. And if the result is positive and they succeed, it enhances their confidence. Even if they fail, they get frustrated and angry with the system. But they learn that when you participate in a democratic process the experience is sometimes bitter. But they also know that through this they can control their own developmental activities, their own resources -- even what comes at the block level they can try and control. They can go and shout, organize "dharna" (protest), things like that -- they can get things done.

As another interviewee put it, "With this approach the community is prepared -- a process of community preparedness. We cannot be there forever and ultimately it is always their problem and their suffering that they have to try to change. If they are in control from the beginning and take responsibility, then they can do so when we are gone".

Other reasons given as to why a non-controlling relationship is necessary include a better chance for fighting the forces of exploitation (including exploitation from within their ranks) through mass participation (with the trust engendered through a non-controlling relationship, more people feel free to join the common struggle); a greater chance of addressing problems when more people gain in self-confidence and feel free to share their knowledge and experience; and, lastly, the question of the increased relevance of the problems that are defined since participants are the people who are living these issues.

> To fight with these capitalists, landlords and money lenders there is a need of mass participation without which one person cannot do much. Otherwise, inequity and injustice will remain because the high caste people are not interested in providing these facilities to the poor.
>
> When one or two people are made leaders, then there is a very great chance that they can turn into the immediate exploiters. I have seen it happen in many cases -- for example, in one schedule caste village where the focus ended up on mainly one or two persons. When they learnt how to gain access to the Block Office and understood the process, they started taking the work order (like, for small construction projects) in their names and started to control the process and taking cuts from the contractors and like this they are profiting. So, the community is left behind again. So, if everybody is involved then everybody knows that a person can be replaced, that somebody else is there to do the job, if one person let them down like this. So, this helps for growth of leadership and collective action, when many people are given charge of special responsibility and learn the processes of organization and action.
>
> Also, if there is participation, then the problems start to come out and if one person is not knowing what to do then somebody else may know what to do and in this way more problems are solved. Everybody's experience is shared and through such a discussion, problems are solved. Also, people can explain their problem and we will know something about it but only they know completely what the problem is and so they have to participate and will do a better job in solving it because it is really their problem which only they can fully understand.

Communicating Trust: Being with them, adding value and understanding biases. The question of control has much to do with the related question of trust in the relationship. By consciously attempting to make sure that people have control and ownership over their process of change, helps to engender trust that is vital for making it possible for change agents and participants to continue to work together on problems and issues. Mutual trust is mutual acceptance. As an interviewee stated: "When we start from their life, their problems instead of our project and our set problems, they are in control and so there will be trust."

Trust is also engendered/manifested through what several interviewees identified as "genuine involvement into people's problem and their life".

> People know when you are concerned for their problems -- it gives you and them a feeling of being with them and being a part of their problems and their life. Situation might be theirs in the specific context but in the larger context it is the agent's problem too and the community's. If the agent does not feel that she is part of the problem and does not have the conviction that the problem is hers, then she will never be able to identify or gain acceptance with the community. This has to be kept in mind.
>
> It is like a sense of being with them. People feel that you have a concern for their problems and that you are not an outsider who has gone there for your own purpose. Once they feel that you have concern for their problems and that you are a

> participant, then they will respond and accept also. There is a sense of being there and standing by the people.

Trust is also engendered/manifested when there is an attitude that is defined by "respect", "fairness" and "equality". As one interviewee expressed it: "When I go to the people as an Organizer, I should feel that people have every right to be treated fairly in the way they are living, just like I am receiving." The question of the need for respect and equality were discussed by two interviewees in the following manner:

> There are NGOs that think that villagers are uneducated, illiterate and uncultured, so you should go as a savior. But people have their own culture, their own history and if you respect these, then you too will learn. Development is not a one way process -- an NGO going into the field and putting inputs in there. Rather, it is a two way process.
>
> The concept of participatory work I learnt from Saoras. Each family has their own plot of land. During planting and cultivation everybody helps each other to cultivate their plots and this works so well for everybody. So we run our participatory organization in the same way that the Saoras are farming in participation.
>
> One should begin at the level where people are. If you want to build something you build on that. Indigenous knowledge, indigenous practices and understanding village systems, understanding the village -- rather than coming in with your ideas, begin from where they are. And then given that one may have exposure to different things -- change agents come in with different experiences and ideas -- so you can add value, no one is denying that. You have to start at where they are and you have to try and understand why things are the way they are. And as one begins to understand their survival strategy, one begins to understand one's own biases.

The question of "an attitude" may be summed up in the words of one interviewee who said: "It is in the way the person or the agent or actor looks at things -- his or her whole, what, style of functioning -- it is the way you communicate."

The process of developing non-controlling and trusting relationships. While the above comments help to explain "what" constitutes the relationship that participatory NFE seeks to develop and "why" this relationship is essential, the following section hopes to build a sense of "how" this actually happens, from the point of view of the role of the change agent. The role suggests that such relationship is built through two inter-related and mutually reinforcing processes: (1) the types of relational modes/attitudes that the change agent actively encourages participants to adopt in their structures and processes of organization for education and rural change and (2) the change agent's relational mode/attitude with respect to the project participants throughout the intervention process.

1. Change agents facilitate the development of non-controlling and trusting relationships by encouraging these relational values in **the structure and process of the people's organization** (for example, refer to previous sections pertaining to the structure and decision-making process of BGKS) for education and rural change.

Similarly, in promoting specific NFE initiatives in areas such as income generation, health or literacy efforts, the desired relational values are encouraged through the utilization of processes and methods that are mindful of the need to give participants maximum control; processes and methods that demonstrate respect for and trust in local experience, knowledge and the local culture at large. Consequently, there is an emphasis on experientially-based learning, evolving or situation-specific curriculum (respects the participant's knowledge base and emphasizes contextual relevance of what is being taught and learned), indigenous knowledge -- such as the herbal medicinal knowledge of vaidyas (which respects culture-specific knowledge or respects culture), promotes the need for participatory organization/action (as a vehicle for exercising/controlling and realizing personal/community responsibility for problems -- the educational process recognizes commitment to and the urgency for actively changing depressing circumstances) and extensively utilizes an interactive pedagogy that emphasizes learner-centeredness and critique. While encouraging these processes in the educational and organizational functioning of people's change efforts, the change agents explain their roles, vis-a-vis the participants, as guides and facilitators.

For instance, the pedagogical process is marked by the following related dimensions: (1) what needs to be learned about arises from the problems and issues identified by the people in their daily experience; (2) the process itself does not strive to separate "knowledge acquisition" from "knowledge application" (action and change vis-a-vis the objective environment around the learners, natural or social); and (3) knowledge is gained through reflecting and acting. This process utilizes what the learners know and bring to the situation and what the teacher knows through his/her experience and any formal/curricular/training based knowledge that he/she may have "acquired".

The "education supervisor" described this process as follows:

> First, we have to motivate them because Adivasi (ST) and Harijan (SC) children are not interested in study -- so the teachers use some skills, like games and songs, something interesting. If we are agreed to go for language education . . . these people do not know Oriya, so we pick teachers from their community who know both languages - Oriya and the local dialect - so they can convey the meanings of words using both languages. We teach by taking words from their daily living and build more ideas around that. So, this way they are more interested and slowly the children can learn both languages.
>
> If we are teaching mathematics we start from their home needs and experience -- for example, what are their expenditures for their family or we give them some money from the organization or from their own Children's Fund and they go and buy matches or oil and come and sell in the village. In this way they learn how the process of doing business works also. Children also collect seasonal products like brush stick, firewoods and leaves and sell in the market to raise their funds. This way they learn about business, earn some money for their livelihood, learn mathematics, and about different forest products in their environment. This way,

> they will do things and then we will talk about that and then do things again and again we talk . . . and this is how we are learning.

Or as described by another interviewee with respect to a similar experience in another initiative that he was engaged in:

> Children are the best agents of change in any community. We were conducting a NFE health program in this village once and a eleven year old boy came to me and said, "you talk of all mahila (women's) organizations and what they can do for us but what about us ? We can do village clearing and chlorination like them." So, we went to the village, he got his friends together and we went and had a chat on the beach and discussed what other organizations were learning and doing and what could be our role. They were so attentive and motivated that they formed the Bal Brigade (children's brigade) and their first project was to involve the teacher and do a survey on cows and the potential for using bio-gas as a source of energy. This way they learned about the environment and energy, mobilized the village in the same learning and took action to lobby the authorities for a bio-gas plant in the village. Other campaigns and learning areas concerned water and a handpump for the village which included training of mothers about its maintenance and questions about water, disease and sanitation. Then there was the immunization survey and campaign and short plays were staged by the children and their teachers and everybody in the village and the children learned about these things like that.

Similarly, the Organizer for BGKS described the effort to revive indigenous knowledge vis-a-vis revival of the traditional system of medicine, as follows:

> We are trying to bring all the herbal medicine practitioners together. They have been practicing this medicine from their ancestors and now with the introduction of allopathic medicines they were withdrawn from this line because they saw that allopathic medicine was getting into the village so powerfully. It gave quick remedies while the herbal medicine was a slow process and it was always available and people seemed to want to look for something new -- a new tendency. There was another problem -- these vaidyas maintain secrecy regarding their medicines and all because it is a trade for them. So they don't share their knowledge and if the person dies then the knowledge dies with him. So we needed to bring this out because there are many good things like TB, broken bones and birth control -- a whole lot of things. So, these things were dying and we wanted to bring them together and this was really tough. It was very difficult to motivate them but once they realized that they have to get together and share their knowledge and then popularize it because otherwise modern medicine will get right into the village and they will reject the traditional system -- they agreed.
>
> First herbal medicine practitioner's workshop was held in 1991 -- forty vaidyas came together for three days and shared many things like herbs, disease, diagnosis and treatment. We documented these things and saw that there were some very good things that people need to know. Like they had medicine for malaria prevention, birth spacing and birth control. This is now a regular affair and this year fifty vaidyas will meet twice for seven day workshops. They are members of the tribal organization and get together and share their problems and some solutions. For this they live and eat together and do all activities together for these seven days and our guides help them. We also do the documentation during discussions on medical issues.

This interviewee described his role as a facilitator during this process.

> My role is to help them come out of themself. These people come from different villages and have a language problem because they don't know Oriya. Some have fear to talk -- so we really have to push them to bring something forward that is inside them. For example, if people are not willing or unable to give lecture in the big group we divided them into small groups and I would go around and informally chat with them -- bring out things from them through dialogue and not ask them to give lecture on this medicine or this plant. I would ask him if he is able to sustain himself as a vaidya and what are his problems and he shares his problem. Then I ask about what kinds of diseases and treatments he has been using and treating, like that -- what herbs. And they may not be willing to share this but there are always some people who are very forward and, if they start sharing, then others also come forward slowly, slowly.
>
> And we also organize and play games to make them feel free. Like the color game, where everybody stands in a circle and one person goes to the middle and tells that he likes all those wearing white shirt. Then these people get together to form a group for their discussion. We also try to make them feel that what they are doing is their own. They are members of BGKS and they are getting together to discuss and share their problems and some solutions. For this they live and eat together and do all activities together for these seven days and our guides help them. We also do the documentation during the discussions on medical issues.

The Education Supervisor explained how organization and planning for children's education took place in the BGKS villages:

> Participatory education means that in the whole process all people will participate in the system of education. In children's education, there is a children's committee and to guide them and make the program a success there is a school committee. In this there are male and female representatives of the community and they supervise and guide and provide for material needs and technical help. Parents provide the teachers quarters also and guide and supervise the children and the teachers. Teachers and parents of the school committee sit down and discuss the educational process and how they will go about it. They make a plan and then the teacher takes this idea to the children and discusses with them to see if they agree -- then only they will continue with the education itself.
>
> I am the education supervisor. In the evening I conduct a meeting with the village committee, the school committee and the teachers and we discuss what the children are learning or why they are not learning -- we discuss the problem and make plans on how to address this problem. Then if the teacher is lacking some skills, we make notes for him and help him in the refresher course at the main office. Here the whole education team shares what they know and tries to make the teacher more effective with these skills. I am the guide.

2. Non-controlling and trusting relationship is built through the **change agent's relational mode/attitude with respect to the project participants throughout the intervention process** in general. For instance, the previous discussion demonstrates how change agents function as "guides" and "facilitators", while promoting a non-controlling and trusting relationship in pedagogical, curricular and organizational processes that the participants are engaged in.

First contact and subsequent interaction is at the request of the prospective participants and this is the first "relational event" that attempts to put participants at the helm of the change process -- it sets the tone for the kind of relationship to be built and is the first active step that places relational control in the hands of the participants.

Intervention at the request of the prospective participants, problem definition by the participants and contextualization of these specific problems by participant and change agents form the basis for motivating participants to take action (in the form of social organization) towards changing their problematic circumstance and accepting the presence of the change agents. An interviewee discussed this intervention process during the change effort to build the organization (BGKS) as follows:

> I went to one village with my cultural team in 1985 -- it was a Christian village. The youth were very happy that a cultural team had come. We were sitting on a verandah when the pastor came and said, "Who told you to come here and with whose permission have you come." We said we have just come to talk to these people and stage a cultural show tonight and he said, " Without my permission, nothing is happening here. We are Christians and by the grace of God we are enlightened. This soil is already fertile and you need not come and sow your seeds here." And that particular person was very violent and the villagers, they could not protest; they were all silent -- they were not even willing to give us protection.
>
> So, later we tried to contact some youth and they said, let us see what they are going to show. In the evening we made a small stage and started this puppetry show. The moment we have started this fellow, the pastor, came running and said, "Stop it, stop it. This is the pagan way of doing things, these are all statues. You cannot bring statues into a Baptist village." There were almost 1000 people there -- so I said, I will stop. I respect you but I will ask the people what they want and then I will stop. But if they don't say to stop, then I will not. So, he asked the people, how many of you don't want to see this, please stand. Nobody stood up and he was insulted. He left.
>
> In the puppet show, we took up problems from their economic life. Like in the summer these people don't have any work here or food to eat so they go to Assam (neighboring state) to work and we addressed this issue through one song which we had composed. When the husband leaves the village, what happens to the wife, to the children -- how they try to live, how they try get something from the forest, the leaves. And when the child is sick, all these things. So, this was touching to them because it is their problem. But there were some men there who had gone to Assam to pick tea leaves and they got angry saying that you are saying we are poor then what are you going to do ? Are you going to give us some things ? Then we said, if you are really interested to know, then call us tomorrow and we will discuss.
>
> So, next morning twenty people came and woke us up and said they would like to discuss. So that day they let us go into their church and we discussed social issues and their problems -- nothing about religion. Then they said, "pastor ko goli maro" (forget about the pastor), we will do it. You come and we'll start organizing. Then we started a youth organization there. Old people neglected us for some time but slowly they had to come in later. Before this, the pastor was the leader, now they have their own organizational leaders and the pastor is just the pastor.

The question of defining and contextualizing problems as part of the intervention process is pivotal in trying to understand the exercise of control because problem definition/clarification makes everything that follows, possible. A number of previous quotes and the following quotes, suggest that change agents, having some grounding (formal education/experience) in the dominant urban system, have an understanding of some of the systemic issues that contribute to problems in a specific rural area and are trying to get participants to understand their specific situation (participant defined problems) in terms of the former or as part of a larger systemic problem/issue. Furthermore, the intent on the part of the change agent is to get people to organize at some point and use this as an instrument for controlling their own process of change. The following are some pertinent quotes from several interviewees:

> People know their problems better. Maybe they are not expressing in our terms but they know their problems. Maybe they are not analyzing it with some important factors but once they analyze the situation, ultimately they would have the control and own the process.
>
> I conduct socio-economic analysis with the people to discuss the problem and how to deal with it. Through joint analysis we come up with some points and then work on them unitedly. I am trying to convince people about their problem through asking questions and analyzing them. Slowly, slowly we are trying to help them to make decisions and participate in action programs.
>
> At a basic needs level, people know what the problems are and know what they are doing. They are the experts at survival. I mean in a drought prone area, surviving over two acres of dry land, who are the experts of survival? But when you get into external linkages and inputs, that's when the difficulties come in and that is where we are actually acting as a catalyst.
>
> There are situations when the community is resistant and then the issue becomes one of how you are to change their approach. If you as a facilitator are not able to move them forward, then you have to do this and adopt a different strategy.
>
> . . . not all communities are at the same level that you can start from zero and go to hundred with all of them. With schedule caste for instance, they were living very close to the upper caste communities in nearby hamlets and they had access to the block rural communication and education and all. They are very much influenced by the other cultures, so they do not think about community organization and their minds are more developed. So, in the beginning with these communities we never went with these issues. We had to start with pre-school education because when we talked to them they said that, "hamara goan me school nahin hai ye nahin hai wo nahin hai" (we do not have a school in our village etc. etc.). So, we said let us start from that as an entry point into the community. So, there we did not start with village committee or organization. It took us four years to develop these structures and networkings.

Understanding how change agents have dealt with situations where, as one of the above statements suggests, the "community is resistant" to a particular change agent's interpretations and suggestions for appropriate action, helps to further the understanding of the nature of control in the relationship. Continuing with the idea expressed in the previous quote, the interviewee explains how that particular situation unfolded and then describes another similar situation.

> So, even though we went with the idea to organize the village we always kept in mind that it should be people's own idea, not just ours. So, when they tell us about the education/school problem we asked them what they have done about it and then they tell us that they went to the block office and found that they were not getting support etc. So, we discuss about re-pressurizing the block/PDS and we help fill out forms and send them again to ask about establishing a NFE center but they say we will do it next year. Meantime, we say that since you find this problem to be very interesting, what are you willing to do about it. So, they say that they will provide a house and we agree to pay the cost of a teacher while they provide the educational materials and we will give teaching-learning materials. And then they have village meetings and discussions about what to learn and who to encourage to participate etc. Through this process, over time like I said four years, village organization eventually happened and was accepted by the people as their idea.
>
> For example, 262 tribal families were involved in brewing and distillation of alcohol for local consumption in a particular area and since this was their livelihood people were not willing to look at changing this practice. My colleague who was responsible for organizing them took the strategy that he put a few educated and willing participants and discussed the economics of alcohol distillation as a livelihood and then left the issue for a while and did other things with the community. Better to leave that issue and don't touch it for a while and get into other issues. That is not the only problem that they have -- there are many problems. Maybe in terms of priority that is the first problem but you can always go to the second. Or go to the eight priority and start from there because you know, the cultural values of different communities are different and they are also guided by their own culture, social customs and belief and all. So, for all the community to start from or think at one particular level is not possible.
>
> Then after a while he said that he had a new insight into the alcohol situation and do you mind looking into this again. By re-working the economics of alcohol distillation and showing them how it was not really paying off and that there were more economical alternatives available, he was able to get their attention and cooperation.
>
> The village worker has to be very dynamic and for this we use the process of action-reflection for ourself and the community as a learning process. We take action and then we sit and reflect on what has happened as a result of this action -- how has this strategy worked or not worked and what next ? So, we have a lot of reflection and this has helped us devise other ways of approaching the problems.

Another interviewee described a situation where people were initially resistant and, consequently, how the situation was handled.

> For example, they mortgage their land for 100 Rs with interest to sahukar (money lender) -- then they get into some other problems. Then they borrow more and, eventually, in this way they could lose their lands. So, we talk about pooling money to make village fund that will give loan to the people at few interest. In the beginning almost 80 percent of the people did not like this savings plan. We put some questions. We show them case studies of practical situation. Then we contact each person personally and explain how this plan will benefit them. It takes time but then it works and people take part later. Slowly they got involved and now they

> have got all their land back from the sahukars. Now they are fully self-financed and cultivating their own land.

What gradually becomes apparent is that even though change agents appear to have "their view" of the broad context of specific problems that the rural participants identify and also see the importance for rural people to organize in order to deal with these problems, control over what happens is still with the people. Even though the change agents try to persuade and persist over time, the choice of problem and action to deal with the problem is still with the participants. While the change agents may have the "power of persuasion", this is apparently not used to "enforce" their position through other bases of power that they possess, such as resource/material or informational power. They continue to assist the community with whatever it has decided on, without withdrawing their support in terms of their presence and/or in material. The process of change appears to be an educational one, based on the need to understand.

As the community organization develops and matures in terms of its ability to meet the needs of the community, with little or no assistance from the intervening change agents, change agents feel that it is necessary to **detach** themselves from the change process.

> Until the time the interventionist feels the people are capable of handling their problems or the people feel this way, she has to remain part of the community but that doesn't mean she will be there for all time to come. There must be a limit which will depend on situation to situation but this is usually the time when the people themselves will let you know they do not feel the need for you. In my experience this has happened and can happen. We can withdraw from the community but we will not withdraw from the cause and the problems.

Communicating this to participants and mutually recognizing its importance, again, helps to point out and build the reality of a participant-controlled relationship that emphasizes a trust in their capacity to be agents of their own change process. As one interviewee stated:

> The people will only know that this is their process, if both of us are conscious that we will be detaching from the process and that our goal is to do ourself out of a job. In my experience of ten years I have witnessed the rise of three large people's organizations that are very capable of managing their own affairs and outsider facilitation is now absent except for occasional contact to keep in touch. They are taking their own decisions and taking stock of their problems and running their programs.

This process is not without its difficulties as the intervening change agents struggle with the whole question of "role adjustment" as the process unfolds. Knowing when to detach is not decided by some precipitous event that marks the "end" of the relationship, so to speak, but is a matter of judgment that not everybody (including the community organization/participants) often agrees on.

> About the participatory process I would like to say one thing. When the voluntary organizations go into a village and create political awareness, once people are aware of their own political rights they start feeling restless -- they start feeling like they want to and need to do something and that is the point where I see that many voluntary organizations withdraw because they are afraid. If they organize for exerting their rights over land, forest or river -- that is when the organizations withdraw but for the people that is the starting point. Once the switch is put on they will not stop. The people will go and this is where the real test for participation lies because when the people start to move all the government machinary begins to get active right from the local money lender, police, block administration and the ministry -- everybody becomes very active against this.
>
> So, at this point when people are very motivated and really understand their social situation and why it is so, there is a chance that people will fix it. If the voluntary organization don't have this understanding, then the people also withdraw. The agent should not withdraw at this point. The role may change from development activist to guide and one could give legal advice and education. Support the process because you are also responsible for what is happening. Some people are fighting, some people are in the jail -- how can you leave ? This is where the real development process starts. You have to try and find a way to remain involved -- maybe even as a friend or as a guide.

As has been suggested in the above quote and on several other occasions by interviewees, change agents described their role and relationship to rural participants as "educators", "friends", "supporters", "guides", "facilitators", "catalysts" and "activists". These labels describe a demeanor or a relational attitude and understanding towards participants that suggests that they (the participants) are the agents of their change process roles that emphasize the need to build non-controlling and trusting relationships.

During the process of intervention, problem definition and process of organization, it would appear that the primary role of the change agent is that of "activist". The agent has a sense of the people's problems, especially a sense of the socio-political-economic basis for them. By involving them in a discussion of their specific problems and connecting them to their larger and immediate context, agents are often able to activate them to start taking decisions to improve their situation. "Friendship" evolves as the trust builds and the process unfolds. "Facilitating" and "guiding" roles along with "training" and "consulting" for specific needs in the process (such as training of teachers/organizational leaders in specific competencies) become more prominent as the prospect of community organization matures and solidifies. As this organization begins to pressure the systemic environment to meet the needs of the people (its members), the change agent and the intervening organization are challenged to remain involved and to define their role "appropriately".

Reflections on Emergent Themes

Participatory NFE: The Struggle to Free the "Subject"

Change agents engaged in participatory NFE generally seem to share the conviction that rural people have been "objectified". That is, these people have been made to believe/accept that the dominant system in which they are imbedded is superior to their way of being and that survival and development entails adaptation to this superior way, at a pace and in a manner acceptable to the interventionists. Rural participants are "objectified" in this manner because they are not viewed as "subjects" or agents of their own process of change , who are creating rather than adapting to some pre-determined vision -- a vision that promises (falsely or otherwise) a superior existence to their current one.

Consequently, participatory NFE seeks to "free people" from this "dependent" existence by helping them to find their voices (their strength and confidence) as "subjects" who are actively choosing and determining their own forms of desirable existence. Participatory NFE is joint reflection, through a process of dialogue, between change agents and rural participants. Specific problems and demands identified and brought up by participants are contextualized (discussed in relation to the dynamics of the political-economic-social-cultural structures in which the community is imbedded) and further problematized by change agents. Through this process of joint reflection and problem clarification, momentum is built to take collective action through community organization. This organization then becomes the vehicle through which participants: (1) initiate various community self-help improvement initiatives (intra-communal action and change) and (2) pressure and adapt the social structures, in which they are imbedded, to meet their needs and aspirations (extra-communal structural change and action).

Education to free the "subject" appears to be a struggle at several levels of relationship and interaction.

(1) **Rural participants (individuals)** struggle to break free from "mental blocks" that discourage self-initiative and self-direction. These blocks could be due to the adoption of a "fatalistic disposition" or due to strategic matters of convenience, where "objectification" and "abdication from self-determination" are seen to be a small price to pay for some form of material sustenance, given the magnitude of such deprivation or due to the fact that the people are naturally fearful of reprisal, should they confront their dominators.

(2) Although it has been briefly alluded to, **rural participants (as a community)** also struggle among themselves to avoid or succumb to the process of "objectifying" their own, as is demonstrated by those who are coopted by the forces of domination. Intra-communal change in this regard also point to the struggle for women

and children's participation in community life as "subjects". Hence, the attempt to structure organization and educational process in a manner that allows for this possibility.

(3) Clearly, the **forces of domination** -- political, religious, administrative, economic -- also struggle to maintain control over those that struggle to be free. Theirs is primarily a struggle to remain as dominators -- as opposed to a struggle to become free from the need to dominate others, unless there is a conscious and willing attempt to change this.

(4) **Intervening organizations** (NGOs) who are aware of the need to avoid "objectification" of rural participant also, unwittingly, perpetuate that which they hope to avoid or actively confront. They plan projects for the people. Consequently, project objectives and results achieved are often contradictory.

(5) This same tension between trying to treat rural participants as "subjects" and agents of their own change process as opposed to "objects" for whom something must be done (doing for or to as opposed to with) is also present in the relationship of the **change agent (individual)** and the rural participant (individual/community).

For instance, while reflecting on the nature of participatory NFE, change agents sometimes tended to speak of rural participants in a manner that suggested they (the change agents) were finding it difficult to see their relationship and the change process as one that is undertaken in communion "with" the people, rather than something that is "done to them" or "for them". A sense of paternalism, characteristic of relationships that "objectify" the "other", becomes unavoidable. Mutual respect becomes problematic when one begins to view oneself or other groups as more or less "developed", thereby negating the inherent "equality" in the position that purports to see all people as "subjects", like oneself. The struggle is to try and be aware of the tendency to slip into the role of the "developer", thereby separating (or elevating) yourself from those who you seek to "develop".

While discussing and reflecting on problems and difficulties concerning the participatory NFE process, change agents pointed out difficulties pertaining to the rural participant, the structural/systemic forces that seek to dominate rural participants and problems concerning the intervention process as it related to their respective or other intervening organizations. Their specific relationship to rural participants was not mentioned in any way, as being a struggle. A participatory relationship, as explained by change agents, includes self-critique and mutual learning. The struggle to develop a relationship based on "mutual learning and respect" requires self-critique and a reflective practice that is ever vigilant of the pitfalls of paternalism, objectification and the perpetuation of dependency. Failure to be self-critical and self-reflective, at a personal level, could well encourage an unconscious gravitation towards paternalism and objectification.

Participatory NFE: A Process of Integration

As the above statement implies, self-reflection and a personal disposition that is based on an understanding of the inherent need and ability of all human beings (which includes rural participants and change agents alike) to be as agents, creators and subjects in this world is fundamental to the participatory NFE perspective being suggested here. This personal disposition and understanding has obvious implications for building participatory or non-controlling, trusting and mutual relationships. Relationships then give shape to corresponding organizational and societal structures that give recognition to the fundamental personal disposition or understanding. Similarly, these structures could deny the subjects (as is being suggested in the way the development problem is constructed) and consequently shape relationships and personal dispositions accordingly, as through the process of "objectification". Participatory NFE integrates the realms of **the personal, the relational, the organizational and the societal**, attempting to create an individual and a structural environment that are mutually reinforcing of the inherent and fundamental need to recognize humans as subjects. Any change process must attempt to integrate and address the personal, the relational, the organizational and the societal levels of existence.

Participatory NFE integrates the need to address **material deprivation and mental deprivation**. Both forms of inter-related dependency are unacceptable because they create conditions that control and objectify the individual, thereby denying the inherent need to be as subjects. Development that seeks to remedy material deprivation without taking into consideration the impact on individual and communal mental dispositions and attitudes vis-a-vis themselves and the change agents, fails to recognize the extent/magnitude of the problem. If people are not the architects and thinkers of their change process (which facilitates mental/emotional change), with full responsibility for their process of change, then mental/emotional deprivation is perpetuated in the name of alleviating material deprivation. What is more, the interventionist, consciously or unconsciously, fails to recognize his/her role in the relationship as "objectifier" and "controller", thereby failing to avail of the opportunity to alter his/her personal disposition. In this manner, participatory NFE integrates the participants in the change process -- both, the alleged **"changer" and the "being changed",** are part of the same process, struggling to free themselves and others around them. Who is being changed and who is doing the changing ? Therein lies the importance of the mutuality needed in all participatory processes, such as the mutual exchange in an interactive and dialogical pedagogical situation between **teacher and learner**.

Similarly, participatory NFE integrates **theory and practice, learning and doing, reflecting and acting, and talking about change and making change a reality**. Participatory NFE teaches about dependency, about the need to and how to organize and about the nature and importance of participatory relationships (content of education) through a process that demonstrates (in action) the nature of independence, the manner in which to organize and the manner in which to relate -- there is an attempted integration of **educational process and content**. For instance, it is an education on how to organize through the act of organizing.

CHAPTER 6

INTERPRETIVE SUMMARY OF THE CASE STUDIES

Change Agent Perspectives on the Nature and Desirability of Participatory NFE and Rural Change

The case studies provide a basis for understanding change agent perspectives on participatory NFE and rural change. This purpose has been realized by addressing two related objectives: (1) determining change agent perspectives on the nature of participatory NFE and (2) determining change agent perspectives on the desirability of participatory NFE. In the two case studies presented in Chapters 4 and 5, analysis was focused on constructing and creating change agent perspectives (emergent themes), without any attempt to guide the process with theoretical concepts from the literature. In this chapter, Chapter 6, these "emergent themes" are "summarized" but with the help of theoretical constructs chosen from the literature -- a choice which is based on the researchers "interpretation" and understanding of the perspectives emerging from the data and from the literature. Consequently, this chapter is being referred to as an "interpretive summary". That is, the researcher takes greater latitude for "reading between the lines" and his "collective/holistic sense" of the research experience is now being used to draw meaningful interpretations from the data (Berg, 1989, p. 338; Holtsi, 1969, pp. 12-13).

The case studies suggest two different approaches to rural development, NFE and participation, an "emergent development" that will be described, briefly, in this chapter. The two approaches are referred to in this chapter as "Participating in NFE Programs for Rural Change" (referring to the Nepalese case study/NFE Literacy Project) and "Participatory NFE" (referring to the Indian case study/Community Health Project). This "interpretive summary" is presented in two sections which are based on the two broad objectives that guided the process of developing the case studies, (1) The Nature of Participatory NFE and (2) The Desirability of Participatory NFE.

The concluding section of this chapter, (3) An Assumptional Analysis of the Two Case Studies, describes the method and purpose for further analyzing the assumptions behind these two apparently different approaches to rural development, NFE and participation, the subject of Chapters 7 and 8.

The Nature of Participatory NFE

The meaning which different actors attach to the term participation, depends on the assumptions of the people and agencies who are managing the development process. The semantics of participation, in turn, find concrete expression in the types of participatory methods and strategies employed in NFE projects. The two case studies would appear to have illustrated this to be the case.

The following interpretive summary of the nature of participatory NFE is developed in terms of three dimensions of an ethical analysis of social intervention suggested by Warwick and Kelman (1976) which include: (1) purpose of the change effort, (2) target of change and the (3) means used to implement the intervention.

Participating in NFE Programs for Rural Change: The NFE Literacy Project

Purpose of the change effort. The change agents and their organization have determined the purpose for the rural participants as being synonymous with the objectives and purposes of a national plan to change the less developed and backward regions, in order to assimilate them into the national process of modernization. The educational process is seen as a an "important variable" in this regard, as its primary role is in "implementing development activities" in order to "facilitate decisions about adopting new concepts, technologies, and patterns of work, and to introduce these within the existing socio-economic setting of the community". The NFE program is one ingredient in this process among many other programs for "development".

Target of change. The individual and community need to be provided with skills, knowledge and information, provided in the form of the NFE project, and hence it is essential that rural people participate in these projects in order to deal with their "shortcomings". The focus is on changing lack of individual/community awareness about available public services and the workings of a national bureaucracy and the need to correct wrong ways, motivations and behaviors that obstruct successful development possibilities for these people.

Means employed to implement participation in NFE programs.

(1) The educational program is geared towards teaching certain predetermined/necessary skills and information in specialized and inter-related compartmentalized areas like literacy, health, agricultural or natural resource management. The sectors of the intervening organization become the bases of the various specialized learning that needs to be transmitted/diffused. Attempts are made to "integrate" efforts in order to realize a synergistic effect for the intended process of change.

(2) Programs are taught by village-based facilitators. Village people are encouraged to participate in this way or nominate their colleagues. These facilitators are then trained by the staff of the intervening agency who train them in the content and the pedagogical process, leaving them with a planned set of pedagogical procedures and curricular content (prescribed text and work exercises, classroom games and methods etc.). Supervision and training sessions continue the contact.

(3) Securing project participation is essential, if the educational content of the project is to be diffused in the individual/community change process. Consequently, rural participants are encouraged to:

-- plan and organize the program in terms of where, when, and who, while also taking up administrative responsibility for matters concerning the number of people participating and the question of fees and contributions; form committees of their own and groups to deal with running the educational program and also to implement learning achieved in the program (women's groups, for instance);

-- share their problems in an organized/guided fashion, under the supervision and guidance of a facilitator who, in turn, follows a set of guidelines or a correct "track" to elicit appropriate learning and pedagogical process (the facilitator is from the community but is trained by the staff of the intervening organization);

-- contribute their ideas and interpretations for curriculum development under an established process; this complements other educational content that is contained in texts prescribed and designed by the Ministry

The above processes are deemed necessary to motivate and secure participation in the program with the view to enhance long term sustainability of the project (make them feel that the project is theirs), which in turn is seen to be essential for their development.

(4) Change agents (external to the area) encourage participation in these ways to better understand rural problems in order that more "relevant" programs and/or curriculum can be developed and also in order to secure program interest and improved diffusion possibilities for new information necessary for their development.

The above summary of the NFE Literacy Project suggests a different interpretation of the nature of participatory NFE as opposed to suggested meanings in the following summary of the Community Health Project

Participatory NFE as a Movement for Rural Change: The Community Health Project

Purpose of the change effort. The purpose of participatory NFE is to build a people's movement through which participating individuals and communities can realize their meaning of life, without having to succumb to dominating social-economic-political structures and processes that begin to dictate this meaning to them. The purpose is to challenge domination through social structures/systems of dependency and to challenge the individual psychology of dependence that helps to sustain these structures.

Target of change. The situation of the individual and community is linked to the social-political-economic structure in which they are imbedded. The individual/community state of psychological dependence and inertia is a mental frame that can only change if they act to change themselves through attempting to change the structures that dominate them.

Participatory NFE aims to: (1) create new persons who are critically aware (break mental frames) of the forces acting on his/her life, gradually freeing themselves from a psychological dependence which supports the continued existence of structures of exploitation and dependency; and (2) mold the immediate (surrounding the community) structures of dependence towards promoting a more participatory and just society.

Means employed to implement participatory NFE.

(1) The content and process of participatory NFE is:

-- uncovering the nature of dependence, control and the structures of dependence that perpetuate such non-participation through reflection and action to change this circumstance;

-- organizing and learning to organize through reflection and organized action to change the structures of dependence and the limiting mental frames of individuals/community (community level organization for extra and intra-communal action and the promotion of other issue-based intra-community organizations such as women's organizations and children's organizations in order to facilitate a participatory culture);

-- reflecting on, practicing and creating non-controlling and trusting relationships at all levels of interaction (change agent-rural participants, rural participant-rural participant, in the processes and dynamics of all rural organizations).

(2) Other distinguishing features of educational process and content include:

-- learning from reflecting and doing or an integration of educational content, process and action (learning from concrete actions/experience to change community conditions);

-- evolving content, or what needs to be learned, emerges based on participant identified problems/issues/inclinations; the content is jointly determined by experience and knowledge of participants and the experience and formal training/knowledge of the change agent/teacher and is continually being re-shaped by reflection on concrete actions taken for the purpose of change;

-- indigenous knowledge and practice is regenerated and "other ways" are introduced as a measure of last resort or supplement, in order to avoid situations of dependence and encourage the "people's meanings" of what is important in life;

-- other functional areas, such as literacy, health, agriculture, income generation, nutrition, etc. are seen as opportunities to promote the characteristics of content and process of participatory NFE stated in point (1), mentioned above.

(3) The role of the agent as a facilitator is crucial for realizing this process. The agent teaches through doing and through example when it comes to the matter of inculcating non-controlling and trusting relationships. The agent cannot become a

"structure of domination and dependence" by attempting to exert control over the participatory NFE process. This will only be possible if the agent is self-reflective and self-critical and constantly vigilant of the need to remember that "the process of change that is taking place is a mutual process" and therefore lends no cause for arrogance or for control and objectification of the rural participant. This is a struggle for the agent, all the participants (among themselves), the agent's organization in its dealings with the people's organization and also for those that willingly and knowingly create dependence in order to benefit from being in control. The attempt to understand the tendency to impose, control and objectify is, in the final analysis, everybody's struggle.

The Desirability of Participatory NFE

In discussing the desirability of participatory NFE, participants from both projects tended to explicitly emphasize the "instrumental value" of such an approach. That is, participatory NFE was seen to be useful as a "motivator", as a means for enhancing the long term sustainability of the project/activities, as being necessary for generating a "critical mass" of people to affect social structural change or as a means for generating more possibilities for "solving problems" through shared knowledge, expertise and material/financial resources. Participatory NFE was seen to be desirable as a "tool/instrument/means" for enhancing the possibility for achieving "other" desired project outcomes -- participatory NFE was seen to improve the effectiveness of a project.

However, change agents from the Community Health Project also implicitly suggested the value/desirability of participatory NFE as an "end/good" in itself. They spoke of the inherent need for people to be in control of their lives as "actors" and emphasized the role of a participatory process of education in "breaking mental frames" that were seen to obstruct this process. That is, participatory NFE was seen to be "intrinsically" good -- a moral and ethical imperative for all people.

The Desirability of Participatory NFE: A Reflection on the Question of Ethics and Effectiveness

As subjects, people need to have control over the process of creating their desired way of being and, conversely, they recognize this as the need of others. So, relationship and structures must be molded to reflect this personal disposition and understanding. Since personal disposition, relationships and organizational and social structures are not adequate in this respect (the development problem), the desired end of participatory NFE is the creation of individuals, relationships, organizational and social structures that recognize the inherent need for humans to be as subjects. This is what is seen to be desirable and good -- the ethical and moral basis for participation and participatory NFE. The means for achieving this possibility cannot succumb to the forces of control and objectification, thereby negating the desired end -- so, from an **ethical standpoint**, participatory NFE **integrates the means and the end** and one engages in the participatory process for the sake of attaining a participatory individual and society. It is good and necessary for people to be in control of their lives and to have the freedom to create their existence (they determine the means and the ends) -- that is the only "justification" for participation. This is because human beings, unlike minerals, plants and animals, are seen to have the ability/gift of "consciousness" and the ability to be "self-aware" and "other-aware". Hence, the inherent need for the freedom to create a desired life experience rather than to merely adapt as object or to be manipulated to adapt to a pre-determined/other-determined system. To control and to objectify is to deny the essential humanness of the human being.

If participation is treated as a means for achieving other ends -- for example, if rural recipients "participate", long term assimilation into the dominant culture is made more feasible or economic growth and consumerism is more plausible -- the justification for participation becomes a matter of effectiveness. Or, for instance, if people "participate", long term sustainability of the project is more probable. The **segregation of means and ends** is inevitable in the case of justifying the need/importance for participation on the grounds of **effectiveness**. When participation is instrumentalized and rationalized in this fashion, it leads to the erosion of the unity of means and ends that is integral to an ethical position on the need/importance for participation. It enhances the tendency to view people as "objects" because they are now "participating" (a means) for ends that you (the change agent) deem as important for them. There is a segregation of those who do the changing and those who are to be changed; the tendency to plan for rather than to plan with; and, the tendency to gravitate towards the paternalism characteristic of such objectification becomes unavoidable. This would appear to be the struggle for all participants engaged in a participatory NFE change effort.

An Assumptional Analysis of the Two Case Studies

The Method of Assumptional Analysis

As has been summarized above, the two case studies tend to illustrate, for the most part, two different approaches to rural development, NFE and participation. It would appear as though the NFE Literacy Project shares some of the major assumptions of the "modernization approach to rural development, NFE and participation" while the same could be interpreted for the "Community Health Project" and what was referred to in Chapter 2 as "the reformist approach to rural development, NFE and participation".

This was an "emergent development" as the analytical reviews of the literature and the two different approaches to rural development were constructed after the case studies were completely analyzed and themes had been established from the data. This was done with the view to ensure that the study was primarily guided by practitioner perspectives. This "emergent development" proved to be of significance in that it now became possible, with the help of fairly well established theoretical and conceptual perspectives on the two approaches described in the literature, to "probe" and "extend" some of the meanings and interpretations suggested by change agents. This "analysis of assumptions", hopefully, enriches the quest for meaning and interpretation on the subject under scrutiny, thereby improving the prospects for rural change.

In Chapters 7 and 8, each case study is considered separately in an "assumptional analysis" that utilizes the literature on the two approaches to rural development, to probe and extend the presented change agent perspectives in Chapters 4 and 5. Data from Chapters 4 and 5 is used, to help illustrate how some of the presented change agent and case study perspectives might be probed and extended with the use of theoretical assumptions and concepts from the pertinent literature. This is not intended as an act of "corroborating theory" with the "evidence" and the purpose for this exercise in assumptional analysis requires emphasizing before Chapters 7 and 8 are introduced into the continuing process of analysis.

The Purpose of Assumptional Analysis

The attempt here is not to "explain the practice" nor to utilize one or two attempts to describe practice/views on practice (the case studies) to "confirm a social theory". That is, there is no "social scientific excitement" gleaned from realizing a potential "map" between the "theory" and the "practice". The "excitement", if you will, comes from knowing that apparent overlaps between particular theoretical descriptions and assumptions and the presented "empirically based case study perspectives" makes it possible to "probe" and "extend" the analysis of the presented change agent perspectives with the help of the pertinent literature. This enriches the quest for meaning and possible interpretations of rural development, NFE and participation, thereby raising the possibility for a more penetrating and enriching analysis for those who will reflect on these meanings with the view to "improve practice" and "bring about change". The goal of this process, it needs to be emphasized, is the possibility for enriching the process of reflective thought and a corresponding possibility for bringing about rural change.

That is, this research is an attempt at creation and reflection for future possibilities of improvement in people's condition (ex-ante view is adopted) and not one of "verification" and "pattern finding" to exalt the status of "accumulated knowledge" on the subject under investigation (an ex-post view). On the contrary, the pursuit is for meaning and interpretation, from several sources (practitioners and theoreticians), regarding rural development, NFE and participation. The idea behind building or creating a reflective base by beginning with practice-based perspectives (change agent perspectives) and then "layering on" more abstract and reflective theoretical/conceptual literature, is to start from the "possible" (empirically based descriptions and suggestions/reflections) and relate it to the "desirable" (normative theory/concepts in the literature). That is, the focus on meaning and interpretation is with due regard to the possibility of a changed practice and the merit/validity of such an approach lies in its potential for "achieving" a "desired direction for the rural change process" and not in its potential for verifying theory or for corroborating an "image of practice" with the "theory on such practice".

CHAPTER 7

THE NFE LITERACY PROJECT: AN ASSUMPTIONAL ANALYSIS

While Chapters 4, 5 and 6 have concentrated on presenting change agent perspectives on participation, NFE and rural change, the following chapters, Chapters 7 and 8, focus on analyzing some of the apparent assumptions behind the "emergent themes" derived from change agent perspectives. Each case study is considered separately -- the Nepalese case study, focusing on themes suggested by change agents working in the SAVE NFE Literacy Project, is the subject of this chapter while the following chapter, similarly, considers the Indian case study or the Oxfam-BGKS Community Health Project. Theoretical and conceptual literature pertaining to: (1) NFE and rural development, (2) participation and rural development and (3) international/rural development was analytically reviewed to probe and build on the presented participant/change agent perspectives on participatory NFE and rural change (see Chapter 3, section on Data Analysis). Italicized statements in Chapters 7 and 8, refer to segments drawn directly or derived from Chapters 4 and 5 (the two case studies), respectively, to help illustrate how some of the presented change agent perspectives might be probed and extended with the use of theoretical assumptions and concepts from the pertinent literature.

Some probable underlying assumptions of change agent perspectives engaged in the SAVE NFE Literacy Project in Gorkha have been grouped under the following sections: (1) The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Social and Individual Change; (2) The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about the Nature, Role and Method of Education; and (3) The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Education and Participation.

The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Social and Individual Change

The change agents engaged in the SAVE NFE literacy initiative defined the development problem in terms of the need to change rural individuals and their communities, in order to help them adjust to the national process of modernization, a process which would result in benefits for them, if they were encouraged to see the need to "participate" in the programs and services that the national government was seeking to provide for them. Consequently, the "development problem" was conceived in terms of securing program involvement, winning over minds, correcting wrong ways and removing social evils, a need for building local capacity, organization and leadership and awareness of government services and a need for tangible material inputs and resources. As one interviewee pointed out " . . . in a national context, all people have to be educated, all *people have to be made productive". And this would only be possible if people were motivated to join these programs of "development" being conceived for them, for their benefit, by outsiders. Such motivation could be induced through provision of materials and resources, through program designs that encouraged beneficiary "involvement" in planning, administration, curriculum generation and pedagogical process and an emphasis on awareness of government services and the need to organize (in order to better integrate into the national system of organization) to make effective use of these services. Change has occurred, as one participant put it, when he sees that " . . . they don't drink dirty water anymore or they use latrines or they send their kids, girls and boys, to school and when there is a sense that we need to be responsible for change in our community" or as another participant suggested, "when they are able to go together and ask for things from the district office".*

Social Evolutionism, Modernization , Dualism and Diffusionism

There are several possible and related assumptions behind this definition of the problem and the associated remedy. The first concerns the imbedded notion and/or theory of social evolutionism. Adherents of this school of social theory suggest that all societies pass through evolutionary stages on the road to development. Social development is analogous to the development of organisms. That is, just as biological laws govern the development of the biological organism, irrespective of geographical location or historical time (the organism was born, it will grow, mature, become old and ultimately die), there is no reason to assume that societal change and development are any less subject to (social) laws (Allahar, 1989, p. 44).

> The conception of invariable natural laws, the foundation of every idea of order, will have the same philosophical efficacy here as elsewhere, as soon as it was sufficiently generalized to be applied to social phenomena, thenceforth referred, like all other phenomena, to such laws. (Auguste Comte, 1855, p. 433 quoted in A. Allahar, 1989, p. 45)

As a positivist sociologist, it was in this context that Auguste Comte postulated the "law of three stages" together with Saint Simon; stages through which knowledge evolved (theological, metaphysical and positivist), with each stage corresponding to a different evolutionary stage of society. Each stage was subject to determinate and invariable laws -- for instance, according to the law of progress human societies are growing and developing toward ever higher and better stages (linear process) or human beings may intervene to retard or accelerate the rate of social change but they can do nothing to reverse the process or skip any stages. That is, in the same way that humans are unable to arrest or speed up their biological evolution, they are similarly impotent regarding questions of social evolution and change (except in the final stage, where some conscious guidance is allegedly deemed possible). According to Comte, the final stage had been attained by Western Europe while other less advanced countries were in the process (Allahar, 1989, pp. 45-47).

Similarly, other evolutionary thinkers have emphasized other stage conceptions: (1) Sir Henry Sumner Maine looks at changing social order based on patriarchy and status culminating with later forms based on freedom and contract (Allahar, 1989); (2) Lewis Henry Morgan regarded human history as advancing from savagery, through barbarism to civilization (Allahar, 1989); and (3) the most contemporary version of this theory and most pertinent to questions of economic development, concern Rostow's (1960) stages of economic growth (all societies pass through a series of stages delineated by their ability to invest in and harness land, labor and physical resources with the aid of the tools of science and technology -- as economic growth takes place, the social and political institutions of traditional society are replaced by more modern forms (the replacement of more communal or tribal patterns of obligation and identification with more individualistic modes of motivation; traditional, feudal forms of political power will be replaced by more democratic forms of rule) (McKay, 1990).

Western Europe typifies the "ideal/highest" stage, regardless of the "unit of analysis" (knowledge, economy, social structures, political structures etc.). The ideal or highest stage (also referred to as the "modern society") is typified by,

> a commitment to scientific rationality; the widespread use of inanimate sources of energy; significant levels of industrialization; abundant food and material goods; bureaucratic and political structures run in an impersonal and meritocratic way; people "freed" from kin and community obligations; and secular and rational religion. (Allahar, 1989, p. 63)

While these theorists have postulated the "what is development/developed?" question or "what happens in its course", another group of social-psychology theorists asked "why it happened" and what specifically caused the breakthrough from traditional into modern societies -- what are the causes of modernization ? Referred to as the modernization school of thought (Myron Weiner, David McClelland, Daniel Lerner, Alex Inkeles and Martin Lipset), this group tended to argue that it was values, motives or psychological forces that determine ultimately the rate of economic and social development and that the "development problem" (why some societies were making slow progress down the social evolutionary path) was a question of the values and attitudes held by members of a given society. While the countries of Western Europe and North America were able to advance on the basis of their value and attitudinal structures, the people of lesser developed countries were seen to lack or were devoid of some of these "progressive values and attitudes" (Allahar, 1989, p. 66). For instance, McClelland (1964) argued that a need for achievement (n-Ach) and entrepreneurship were essential for development and that societies which had a "high rating" on both factors are more likely to be developed. He tries to show how societies that encourage entrepreneurial behavior and competitiveness among their members tend to be more developed than those in which people tend to "act very traditionally on economic matters" (p. 183). Or Lipset (1967, p. 6, referred to by Allahar, 1989, p. 69) suggests that attitudes and behavior antithetical to the systematic accumulation of capital are based on traditional value systems that are not favorable to the emergence of a modern industrial society or in social systems that are united around such themes as kinship and local community, one does not tend to find people who exhibit or display those characteristics associated with "modern man". Power and authority are decentralized, roles remain diffuse, expressive rather than instrumental behavior is common, and traditional values are perpetuated. These are the precise value orientations that are seen by Lipset to be symptomatic of backwardness and underdevelopment.

Two additional assumptions about social and individual change are prevalent in the modernization approach to rural development -- dualism and diffusionism. Just as some countries appear to be backward and traditional in comparison to the developed and industrialized world, so, too within them can be found both the traditional and modern sectors -- dualism. Anthropological (Robert Redfield), sociological (Wilbert Moore/Norman Long) and economic (W. Arthur Lewis) have attempted to demonstrate the differences between the two sectors within these countries. The challenge of development or modernization is to bring these two sectors together under the modernized sector -- to assimilate the traditional and the backward.

> Economic growth does not begin throughout the economy simultaneously. Here some corporation opens a mine, employing 500 people. Somewhere else a port is built. Somewhere else a merchant begins to buy a commodity for export . . . ultimately, the developing sectors will grow until they embrace the whole economy. (Lewis, 1983, pp. 626-627)

Consequently, under the dualism (economic, political, social and cultural) scenario, the question of rural development becomes one of how to transform a low income/growth agriculturally-based sector to a modern, high income/growth industrially based sector. Rural and non-modern (traditional) people are seen to be "deficient" in that they are the antithesis of what the modernization theory postulates. They lack a scientific-technological understanding, their societal, cultural and political structures are generally communal and tribal while their productivity is low, given their labor intensive (as opposed to physical capital intensive) subsistence based agricultural practices (Mustafa & Bryceson quoted in Kassam & Mustafa, 1982).

The challenge of development or modernization is to bring these two sectors under the modern sector. This challenge is picked up in the concept of diffusionism. Intimately linked to the social evolutionism and socio-psychological theories of modernization, diffusionists see the solution to the problems of traditional societies as coming from outside those societies. It postulates that modernization can and will be effected when skill, technology, capital, values, institutions, and knowledge from modern countries/sectors are diffused into the backward country/sector. According to this view, because development consists of diffusion of certain economic, organizational, and cultural practices from the advanced countries/sectors to the backward countries/sectors, underdevelopment can only be explained by the presence of certain obstacles or resistance (such as "backward cultural attitudes and understanding") to such diffusion (Allahar, 1989, p. 75).

Equilibrium and Societal Maintenance

The modernization approach to rural development stresses the need to achieve a state of "equilibrium" in the societal system of application (societal maintenance within the assumptions of modernism). Change, under this perspective, is viewed as a consequence of how well or not the parts of a societal system fit with each other and surrounding or interacting systems. The process of change is understood as a process of tension reduction. That is, while the source of change lies primarily in the internal stresses and strains created by exogenous intrusions (eg. from Marxist nations/forces) or endogenous inequalities (e.g.. poverty/rural attitudes), the system attempts to minimize these tensions and conflicts through internal mechanisms of adaptation and adjustment, such as the system of education (La Belle, 1986, p. 43). In fact, in keeping with the organismic metaphor of social evolutionism, tension and conflict are seen to be social "pathologies" -- anything that disturbs the "natural" functioning of society (such as a revolution) is said to be pathological, just as biological organisms can be disturbed. For Comte (1855, p. 477 quoted in A. Allahar, 1989, p. 45):

> . . . pathological analysis in the examination of cases, unhappily too common, in which the natural laws, either of harmony or of succession, are disturbed by any causes, special or general, accidental or transient; as in revolutionary times especially; and above all, in our own. These disturbances are, in the social body, exactly analogous to diseases in the individual organism.

W. Arthur Lewis (1983) refers to the "revolution of rising expectations", that is, due to the climate of hope which the modernization process creates among large masses of impoverished people, and the general social, economic and political dislocations that attend the transition to modernity, "trouble may be expected" (p. 626). The increasingly visible polarization between the immediate beneficiaries of modernization and those who live and work in the depressed sectors that are not yet touched, the "haves" and the "have nots" is the reason for "such trouble". But according to this perspective, major social upheavals are neither necessary nor inevitable. By accelerating the process of modernization, quickening the transition, the people who live in the traditional sectors can be reached earlier and be shown the benefits of modern living before their disaffection grows too great (Allahar, 1989, pp. 74-75).

Once the structures of a modernist state have emerged or while they emerge, the focus of change is on the individual rather than on political-economic-social structural change. Social maintenance is little concerned with such radical change (structural change/revolution), as consensus regarding the correctness of existing/emerging modern economic and political structures makes the drive for change a question of enhancing individual welfare within the larger modernizing society. That is, as La Belle puts it (La Belle, 1976, p. 21), a "deprivation development" perspective that views people from underdeveloped regions ". . . as basically backward and hence deprived of appropriate values, technology, and organization, who were in need of modern attributes to achieve progress." Individuals with "traditional" cultures are seen to be "deficient" and it is they that have to change or be changed, in order to meet the dictates of a modernizing social system.

The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about the Nature, Role and Method of Education

Nature and Role of NFE: A Means for Social Maintenance and Diffusion

According to La Belle (1986), the role of education envisaged under this perspective of development is essentially one of societal maintenance through diffusion. In other words, education is "a mechanism of adaptation and adjustment" that helps ensure the incremental transition to the desired stage of modernization.

For instance, educational programs prepare individuals to take their place as economically productive citizens in the existing socio-economic structure. The economic rationale for education is grounded in Theodore Shultz's "Human Capital Theory" (Schultz, 1961), referred to in chapter 2. The same chapter introduces the "Structuralist critique" of formal education and other similar strategies of education (NFE), as mechanisms for social maintenance. Another manner in which education is a mechanism for societal maintenance is through its capacity to transmit common knowledge, values, and experiences, thereby helping to bring together elements both within and between systems. At the same time, education differentiates society by providing the skills necessary to sustain increasingly specialized economic requirements. However, equilibrium is maintained through the promotion of value consensus within and between the various segments of a modern(izing) society. Educational programs, by acting as dispensers and processors of information, can link components within (the same) and between (different) systems as well as provide the messages necessary for the system to evaluate and adjust its activities to ensure maintenance. Such maintenance oriented education facilitates the orderly adaptation to stresses and strains since formal educational programs are recognized by the state apparatus and represent the vested interests of those who wish to maintain the system of modernization while minimizing radical bids for change (La Belle, 1986, pp. 51-52).

The role of NFE in terms of its desired role of social maintenance and the related economic rationale under the modernization approach to rural development, falls into three major categories (La Belle, 1986, p. 100): (1) occupational skills training in accordance with human capital development; (2) transmission of information, skills, knowledge, values, attitudes and behavior to adapt individuals and groups to the existing requirements of "development as modernism" (this is accomplished through numerous programs in areas such as literacy, agricultural extension, or health instruction); and (3) the encouragement of community organization and development for democratic decision making, self government, local economic cooperation -- programs that typically depend on intervention as communities usually have few, if any, locally derived resources with which to address their concerns.

La Belle (1986, p. 99) contends that health, family planning, and related programs are "typically adjuncts" to the modernist educational focus on social maintenance and co-optation of the poor and disenfranchised through specific occupational skills training to promote employable/marketable skills so as to raise productivity and income. Poor health, high birth rates, inadequate nutrition and poor sanitation are considered drains on resources and limits to a high quality work force. Likewise, literacy programs are assumed to be a major contributor to raising work force quality. Furthermore, each of these "life areas" provide an opportunity for NFE to transmit and diffuse modernist information, knowledge and values that are aimed at transforming "traditional ways" of being and doing.

A report by SAVE (1990) summed up the nature and role of the educational process as follows:

> *Education is an important variable that significantly relates to the successful implementation of development activities. Its primary role in implementing development activities is to facilitate decisions about adopting new concepts, technologies, and patterns of work, and to introduce these* *within the existing socio-economic setting of the community*. (p. 10)
>
> *In some localities, like Taranagar, the level of education is extremely low. This will limit likelihood of these communities adopting new concepts, technologies, or patterns of work for development activities. These more backward areas require more concentrated motivational activities and nonformal education centers for any development measures to be effective. (p. 20)*

According to the Impact Study (SAVE, 1990, p. 20), through its integrated development strategy, SAVE was attempting the following: "The basic concept was that by *entering the village panchayat with NFE classes, people, especially women, would become aware of different development activities (functional focuses -- income generation, health, natural resource management, etc.) through curricula used in these NFE classes. Such awareness, it was hoped, would result in better participation in the different community projects and better integration into the community for individual projects." Educational programs focused on increasing literacy rates, functional literacy, the development of functional skills, the encouragement of enrollment in the local schools and the channeling of women into functional activities (SAVE, 1989, p. 6).*

NFE Strategy and Method: Maintenance and Prescription

The role for NFE in the over-riding conceptualization of rural development as a process of modernization, includes an associated approach to NFE strategy and method pertaining to the question of pedagogy, curriculum, planning and organization (or the educational delivery system).

According to Wallace (1961), in maintenance-oriented societies, since the need is to train people for jobs so they may become functional in the production and distribution process, the emphasis of NFE programs is on building technical skills and diffusion of related information (e.g. occupational, health, economic organization). Morality is emphasized next because it is necessary to keep the society from falling apart (e.g. importance of civic participation, decision-making and self government within the norms of a market oriented democracy; the importance of working for an honest wage and a "bootstraps self-help" orientation to community problems). Intellect (inductive thinking; socio-political critique; meta analysis of social-individual processes) comes in a distant third, as the state is anxious about the threat to stability that may arise from genuine intellectual development.

Given the focus of "modernizing NFE" on the need for societal maintenance and the related economic/technical role for such educational programs, La Belle (1986, p. 60) suggests that these NFE programs tend to be mainly prescriptive in orientation. That is, the intent of such an approach is to provide people with the "right" information in accord with the dictates of those who determine the nature and direction of the program.

Consequently, a prescriptive NFE methodological approach places emphasis on control and top-down planning of curriculum. That is, the emphasis is on what is taught, or the content of messages and consequently, curriculum takes the form of pre-planned and centralized programs for change (La Belle, 1986).

The question of process is one of structure and provision of an efficient and standardized mechanism for delivery. The concern in this regard is with the role and behavior of the teacher or delivery system, who/which diffuses a pre-planned message to passive learners, a message that represents the interests and the welfare of those who plan the curriculum (La Belle, 1986).

The learner is treated as an object of the teaching/learning process because their task is to acquire the attitudes, skills, and knowledge presented by the teacher or other communication medium and to store or apply the information and skills within the existing environment. This approach has been referred to as the "banking" approach to education because its effect is to "fill" learners with information (La Belle, 1986).

The literacy package being promoted by SAVE in its NFE project was designed by the education ministry of the national government; the post-literacy phase was under similar direction, while participant experiences were included to "increase the relevance of the subject matter" and to "motivate" people to continue to enroll and stay with the educational process; the pedagogical attempt was to focus on being learner-centered in that the participants were being encouraged to "say something" and the facilitator was to take a "less active role", provided they (the participants and the village-based-facilitators) stayed on "track" or else the desired "gains would not be achieved"; participants were encouraged to prioritize their own problems but, in the end, it was the agency that decided what could be supported and if there was a conflict in choice "felt needs were adjusted through an educational process"; and finally, participants were encouraged to plan and administer the project under the guidance and supervision of the agency staff while organization building (based on imported organizational models) was encouraged with a view to integrate the communities into the national administrative structure and process.

As one of the interviewees from SAVE put it, "What we have to be aware of is that we are trying to win over their minds. We want them to benefit from the policy and the process that has been outlined and we want to make them understand the benefits of following these methods and policies for them. . . . We have to get them to come to class and motivate them and make them literate."

Education and Individual Change

This "prescriptive" approach to NFE strategy and method is based on assumptions underlying behaviorist theories of individual and psychological change that concern themselves primarily with behavior change through alterations in an individual's immediate environment (Kunkel, 1970; Skinner, 1971). Rewards and punishments shaping and maintaining behavior are embedded in a person's social context, so it stands to reason that changes in that context may cause changes in behavior. As Kunkel (1970, p. 24) notes, "By judiciously altering those aspects of the social environment which constitute rewarding or punishing consequences for specific activities, it is possible to alter these behavior patterns and to initiate and accelerate social change."

Simply put, behaviorists believe that individual actions that generate reinforcing consequences will lead to a repetition of such actions. In turn, for reinforcers to be effective, the individual must experience some degree of deprivation/perceived deprivation. So, deprivations may be physiological or learned, that is imputed by the sociocultural mileu (perceived deprivations). Either way, people must become aware of new possibilities or they must become dissatisfied with their current circumstances. The implications for NFE program method are as follows (La Belle, 1986):

(1) Perceived deprivations can be affected through education and media which spur modernism and economic progress by raising aspirations, broadening horizons, and changing frames of reference. For instance, education and media propagate the ethnocentric perception that to secure social and economic progress the peoples of the developing world must imitate the behaviors of individuals from industrialized countries. Hence, the earlier mention of La Belle's use of the expression "deprivation development" (deficiency) -- treating the learner as having been deprived of the skills, attitudes, or knowledge that are said to be necessary for the development process (modernization) to occur. Lewis (1983), mentioned earlier in this chapter, similarly alludes to this approach to education and development and its psycho-social effect, when he warns of the possibility of some "trouble" due to the "revolution of rising expectations" created by the process of modernization.

Acording to the Education Program Officer for SAVE:

> *Like we discuss the benefits of education and literacy and the problems and more that it is about benefits. We explain this to them. Then we talk about forest management or agriculture and old traditional customs and how they can and need to be removed. . . . We bring in resource persons for personal hygiene, family planning, agriculture, rehabilitation etc. to provide training. By making these people come and talk to the village committees we get them involved in community development activities like getting them to build roads or telling them that this should also be considered for these reasons and like that. We should improve the village, then only can we have progress. We talk about other villages which have attempted these things and say that they have done literacy classes and this is what they have achieved as far as developing their community goes. We tell them that they should participate in the literacy class and then only we can provide benefits for them like those other villages and places that have participated. Then only will you benefit and gain from this.*

(2) The teacher or facilitator is encouraged to learn about the local context in order to identify deprivations and existing and potential reinforcers. Building on felt needs can be re-stated as rewarding perceived deprivations. Respecting local value systems is, again, another way for the behaviorist to say that rewards must be in line with perceived deprivations. In this sense a value is seen to be essentially that which is perceived as reducing deprivations.

Consequently, characteristics of modernist NFE programs that emphasize being participant centered, needs oriented and flexible view these characteristics, not as ends but as means of achieving the pre-determined ends of assimilating people into the modernist system in a more pragmatic manner (participation for effectiveness) than might be achieved from the direct imposition of what "needs to be learned". In this sense, the participant is still an "object" as the relationship is defined in instrumental terms. For instance, Kunkel's (1970, p. 24) hypothesis referred to above, implies that a change agent or facilitator in a community should assume the role of the operant conditioner in the laboratory. The agent can generate change by extinguishing old behavior patterns and shaping new ones. In this effort, he/she can rely on a series of specific procedures which have been detailed through empirical research.

As the NFE Coordinator from SAVE explained:

> *We must also learn about their society and culture and traditions. We study it and if there is something wrong with it, we are going to change it. If they are doing something in the wrong way, we correct it or if it is in the negative we make it positive.*
>
> *Sometimes the facilitators don't go according to the pre-plan as we taught in the training process. Poor people, sometimes they don't follow the teaching method that we trained them in and start to go their own way. This is not right because the amount of achievement that we are seeking, it is now not possible to get it. The result is not good enough, if they keep going like this.*

(3) Behavior can be controlled by programming positive and negative reinforcements in the physical and social environment. Failure to control the learning environment would mean leaving the environment with de facto control and hence, unpredictable/undesirable results. Scrinivasan (1977) outlines the implications for instruction in terms of environmental control mechanisms: specification of instructional objectives in behavioral terms; analysis linking learning tasks to objectives; division of content into segments that encourage self-instruction and an overt response by the learner; provision of immediate feedback; possibility of subject matter mastery; giving rewards upon completion of each step; and dependence on curricular materials, rather than individuals, for ensuring that learning takes place. Such a prescriptive approach to education shifts teaching and learning to a materials based process and hence, to the physical environment.

The educational process is conceived of as an economic production process, in which students (raw materials) are transformed by teachers (the workers/labor) using particular processes (standardized curriculum and teaching methods) to achieve certain outcomes -- knowledge, skills, attitude and behavior.

The Modernization Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Education and Participation

Education on Participation as a Means: Education as Diffusion of Information on Participation as People's Contribution

Oakley (1991) points out that effective people's participation in development cannot simply be proclaimed; it has to be developed.

> The task involved in asking rural people, many of whom for years have been excluded or treated as mere instruments of development projects, to seize the initiative and to participate actively in development activities is formidable. In this respect we must not be deceived when rural people flock to gain access to a development project; when there is the possibility of support from whatever source, people will seek to benefit. This is the way development has worked for years, but the dynamic too often depressingly fails as resources dry up or the immediate political objective has been achieved. In order to avoid this scenario, it is argued that participation must be seen as an educational process and that the demands of this process must be considered. (Oakley, 1991, p. 194)

However, the nature and objectives of such education for participation depend on the conceptualization of participation. If participation is viewed as a means for improving project implementation, then education for participation is "education as information". Or, if participation is one element in the overall project objectives, i.e., projects which are essentially technical (literacy, agriculture, water and forestry) include participation as an element in their approach where essentially technical objectives are met in a participatory way, then again, education for participation emphasizes "education as information". Similarly, if participation is purely interpreted as "people's contribution" and "organization for the purpose of receiving" (see section on organizing below) or a motivational exercise, then education for participation is construed as "education as information".

That is, the educational element in a participatory project is essentially one of informing people about a project and preparing them to contribute to its implementation (time, money, labor, involvement). In this approach people are educated for a predetermined project and, although they may be consulted or given a limited voice, the education is concerned to prepare them to participate within already defined parameters (Oakley, 1991, p. 194). Since participation has been instrumentalized into a means, an input or one element in a project seeking to achieve essentially technical objectives guided by the demands of the objectives of modernization, so has the education on this desired form of participation.

Change agents from SAVE stressed the importance of NFE in educating people about the need to participate and continue to participate in NFE programs and other related rural development programs. They pointed out the importance of NFE literacy initiatives as providing the basis for people's participation in other rural development projects *(agriculture, forestry, water, etc.). This is because NFE of this kind was seen to motivate people by making them feel that these "projects were their own" by encouraging them to participate through monetary contributions and contributions of their time and effort in planning, administering and organizing the programs.*

As the Education Program Officer from SAVE explained:

> *So, if they want a literacy class, it is their responsibility to form the class, make the list and select one person to be the teacher or facilitator of the class. The users or community decide all this and they decide where they want to learn, the venue is theirs -- we don't tell them that they have to meet in this school or this house -- they decide based on what is convenient for them and which time it will be, early or late evening or the night. So, I think all these things are the participatory approach from the beginning.*
>
> *. . . the other is contribution in terms of registration fee, tuition fee, cost for the books -- this is the difference between other programs and ours where everything is free of cost -- they have to contribute -- one of the advantages of this is that only those who are interested will enroll in the class but if you provide free, initially there will be lots of people but by next week the number of drop-outs will be quite high. By the end of the program only 5 people or so will complete. So, if we are raising their contribution, the program is going to be much more effective.*

The quote from a SAVE report (1990), introducing the previous section on the assumptions regarding the nature, role and method of education, states that without NFE initiatives of this kind, people will not be amenable to "adopting new concepts" -- education is an "important variable" that is seen to be "essential for the implementation of development activities".

Education on Participation as a Means: Education as Diffusion of Information on Participation as Organization

NFE programs under a modernization approach to rural development emphasize community organization (Coombs et al., 1973), as do the NFE programs under a reformist approach to rural development. Modernist NFE and reform-oriented NFE both place an emphasis on change agents and facilitators, often from outside the community; they both emphasize community organization and the participation of community members in the establishment of an agenda for social action and in carrying out that agenda; and they both use radio, print media, and other forms of communication to inform and link individuals and communities for common pursuits. While the nature of the activity engaged in by communities is more similar than different the underlying goals and ideology are distinct. There are at least three fundamental aspects of modernist NFE programs intended to promote community social action, organization and civic participation that distinguish such educational efforts from similar efforts under the reformist NFE approach:

(1) Organization as a receiving mechanism or means -- These organizations, such as the type being promoted by SAVE, are viewed as intermediaries in rural development

and are usually external constructs which have been introduced into rural areas in order to promote and sustain development. Implicit within these organizations is that they serve as a "bridge, a vehicle or a receiving mechanism whereby rural people can participate in development" (Oakley, 1991, p. 190), i.e., a receiving mechanism for people's contributions (participation as contribution) and for engaging governmental services.

The process of organization is seen as a means to facilitate project implementation and not as a process that is intrinsic to the development of participation, i.e., the process of organization is not seen as a way of promoting participation, as spontaneous and organic growth and development of organization based on indigenous patterns of organization (Oakley, 1991, p. 190).

(2) Organization and social maintenance -- Such organizations are sanctioned by the government and are "non-threatening" to the existing structures. That is, community social-action/organization focuses on enhancing the quality of life of participants and to foster citizenship and other political goals within the constraints of existing social structures. Consequently, community organizations are frequently dependent on the existence of supportive political and economic structures, rather than on activities that the community generates, thereby hindering the long term viability of such action, especially once the change agents have withdrawn. Such institutions have few roots in the community and they have not been tied to structural change which would provide the basis for new behavior, funding, and new opportunities.

For instance, economic cooperatives are characteristic of the modernist NFE initiative to enhance the economic power of the poor. However, under such a perspective, when cooperatives come into direct conflict with entrenched local elites or large-scale, mechanized, capitalist agribusiness, the system advocates stability and "tension reduction" to ensure equilibrium (La Belle, 1986). The wider network of credit, technology, and marketing based on individualistic and capitalistic ideologies and practices inevitably shapes and pressures small community-based organizations, of which only a few are likely to survive.

While modernist NFE focused on community social-action and economic cooperation, emphasizes the need for a "self-help" or "bootstraps" type mentality, with each community using activities such as the construction of latrines, roads, schools, houses and so on, as vehicles for the creation of a psychological predisposition that encourages mobilizing community resources for solving community problems (economic or otherwise -- participation as contribution), the same social group process is not encouraged as a means to confront dominating and oppressive social structural conditions (participation as awareness raising and empowerment). While this approach may result in giving people a sense of what they can achieve on their own and some awareness of social problems and their causes, it is likely to create frustration in the face of structural impediments; impediments at which change efforts are not consciously directed and consequently, community organizations may be forced to choose more confrontational actions (and ideologies) in seeking greater economic and political power relative to this larger impeding social structure (La Belle, 1986, p. 163).

(3) Group action and diffusion -- The emphasis on community action/organization often reflects pre-planned steps by international and governmental agencies to respond to the lack of success with narrower information delivery programs like agricultural extension, technical/vocational training, literacy and health programs. This is seen to be a more pragmatic (effective) approach to diffusion of information and values necessary for adapting to the needs of a modern state system. In this regard, Biddle and Biddle (1966, p. 78) point out that the emphasis on psychological variables is associated with the idea that community action is a "group method for expediting personality growth", involving such principles as self-help, cooperation, self-reliance, and democratic participation and decision making.

Neihoff (1966) helps put this modernist NFE community social action program into perspective by conceptualizing the planned change process as part of an equilibrium paradigm involving two interacting forces: the action of the change agent and the reaction of those expected to adopt new ideas. The agent's action consists of the techniques and strategies employed to convince recipients to adopt the idea (pre-planned process and content objectives), while the clients reaction includes the attitudes and behavior that stem from their perception of the value of the innovation. Neihoff's schema assumes that individuals and groups operate primarily in accord with their own desires as opposed to behaving primarily in response to existing social structural constraints generated by dominant groups (La Belle, 1986, p. 139).

The change agents from SAVE emphasized the importance of organization building (educating the people about the process of organization) as a means for rural people to connect with the existing governmental service delivery system -- if they organized, they could "benefit from this". According to SAVE's Impact Study Report (SAVE, 1989), the C-BIRD methodology emphasized: (1) developing local leadership, (2) transfering skills to community people, (3) assisting in establishing viable local organizations, (4) mobilizing local resources, (5) assisting communities to expand their finances; and (6) promoting linkages with other institutions. The same report, in acknowledging the positive impacts of SAVE's "alternative methodology for intervention", states that the new approach allowed for a much "closer coordinated relationship" with government agencies, while also *welcoming positive acknowledgement from "His Majesty's Government" for taking on greater responsibility in the country.*

The Education Program Officer described the benefits of organizing people, in terms of establishing linkages with the existing service delivery system, as follows:

> *In the beginning, people were not aware of the resources available in their community. For example, there are different type of line agencies and government agencies that are supposed to provide different types of services and facilities but as they were not aware of these facilities, they were not able to tap these resources. But since the education program they have been able to develop themselves and are now coming to different line agencies and asking support and many are using support from the government.*

Participation, Education and the Question of Economic Base

A vast majority of rural people in the developing countries have scarce resources and, often, an absolute lack of resources makes it extremely difficult to climb out of this poverty. The following arguments have been put forward (Oakley, 1991; Rahman, 1985), that suggest the importance of building the economic base as a critical element in the process of participation: (1) The economic base acts as an incentive or evidence of a tangible benefit which can result from active involvement in the development process; (2) There is a link between the educational process within participation and the need for concrete action; economic activities can provide this scenario and achieve the twin objectives of developing both the resource base and confidence and solidarity among project participants; and (3) There is evidence of an increasing move away from projects which concentrate solely on awareness-creation activities; such projects often lose direction, provoke frustration and lack strong focus that an economic activity can provide.

However, how this economic base is to be built, the question of how this impacts the participatory process and the purpose for developing this resource base is often what is in dispute. Oakley (1991, pp. 198-202) defines two divergent approaches to the question of building the economic base:

(1) Projects that emphasize economic development as the goal and define participation as people's contribution (means) to achieve primarily economic goals (within the existing structures of political economy), so that they may participate in the economic benefits, emphasize economic (material) issues to the virtual exclusion of the educational process of awareness raising (non-material issues) aimed at building self-reliance and structural change. The economic base is externally determined as these projects emphasize huge capital injections or other mechanisms to increase access to economic inputs (diffusion) and evaluation is skewed towards achieving material results. The process of organizing begins with an economic project and participation (as organization) becomes a means for achieving economic goals. Traitler (1974) points out the possibility that such an approach could

reduce the recipients to a form of "dependency" that these very programs claim to wish to reduce:

> A pattern of dependency has been established which is self-perpetuating. People who are in need of goods and services do not care about the kind of dependence the delivery of goods may create, as long as the goods are being delivered. Therefore, it is very difficult to break a particular oppressive pattern of delivery, because the goods ultimately 'redeem' the pattern of delivery. Thus, people have internalised the fact that their dependence on outside decision-making is the price they have to pay for smooth delivery of goods. The goods are in fact assuming an alienating role. (p. 9)

Change agents from SAVE defined the development problem in terms of the need for "tangible inputs" in the project process, as opposed to primarily focusing on educational process. Such inputs were seen to be "motivational incentives" for project participation. The major financial contributor for the various projects (including NFE) came from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), while SAVE was also in the process of negotiating a four year, one million dollar mega project (Irrigation Management for Economic Development) with the government of the Netherlands (SAVE, 1992).

(2) Projects in which the economic base issue becomes a means for developing participatory process/goals; economic projects evolve from people's own efforts during the process of organizing and the project's economic base is established not only to generate economic benefits, but as a focus around which the participatory process can develop. These projects attempt to encourage people's contribution and facilitate this process through additional monies/expertise/resources (internally determined economic base); they emphasize the educational base of awareness raising in the process in order to develop people's understanding of the economic system in which they operate so as to prepare them as and when they negotiate with the system in some future economic activity (economic improvement through raising awareness in order to affect structural change -- redistribution of resources); and these projects are important in themselves for the additional resources they might generate; but they are equally important in the way they mobilize rural people around a common activity and strengthen community and organizational links and commitment.

Making resources available is vital but it is the manner in which they are applied and used which is more critical in terms of the overall process of participation. To simply throw resources at the rural poor is not enough. Bhasin (1985, p. 5) summarizes the debate as follows:

> The poor are not going to be interested in consciousness-raising for its own sake. All consciousness-raising must lead to an improvement in their material conditions and vice versa. In fact this dichotomy between organizational work and programs for economic development is false and misleading. The economic position of the

> poor can be improved by removing scarcity and exploitation and if these two tasks go on simultaneously, it is of course ideal.

Modernization, NFE and Participation: An Ethical Evaluation of the Rural Change Process

Warwick and Kelman (1976) and Arnstein (1969), both referred to in chapter 2, provide the conceptual frameworks that are utilized in the following ethical evaluation of the rural change process. Warwick and Kelman (1976) distinguish four aspects of any social intervention that raise ethical questions pertinent to participation in terms of a societal/individual process of change and the related implications for programs, like NFE programs, that facilitate these change processes: (1) the choice of goals to which the change effort is directed; (2) the definition of the target of change; (3) the choice of means used to implement the intervention; and (4) the assessment of the consequences of the intervention.

Similarly, Arnstein (1969) developed a typology of participation referred to as the "Ladder of Citizen Participation". Her ladder categorizes citizen participation in terms of citizen power and in so doing, focuses on the central issue of the ability to bring about or forestall change. The ladder is grouped into three generalized grades of participatory power (from the point of view of the citizen) starting from the grade of least power -- non-participation (manipulation and therapy), to tokenism (informing, consultation, placation) and citizen power/participation (partnership, delegated power, citizen control), the latter resulting in a revolutionary transformation of the prevailing power base.

Choice of Goals to Which the Change Effort is Directed

> Recognizing the choice of goals for intervention is determined by the value perspective of the chooser - which is not necessarily shared by all interested parties - is the first and a frequently neglected step in an ethical analysis of social intervention. (Warwick & Kelman, 1976, p. 478)

Development as modernism puts forward the process and goal of modernization as the desired choice of goal to which the change effort must be directed. The economic, political and social values of western industrialized nations and "more developed", in this regard, is seen as better in most senses than "less developed". Such latent choices of goals are especially troublesome when they ignore the fact that value judgments have been slipped into seemingly value-free definitions of historical processes. "Statements about goals for change deemed desirable from a particular value perspective are often presented as empirical statements about the conditions for a universal process of development" (Warwick & Kelman, 1976, p. 479). That is, when terms like modernization and development are used as if they represented empirical descriptions of generic, natural processes (social evolutionism), it is too easy to ignore the particular historical experiences and ideological preferences that enter into these processes. For instance, by presenting the goal of modernization and the present state of "underdevelopment" as "natural or a fact of nature", frees the proponents of modernization from accepting responsibility for actively under developing regions through the historical process of colonization and imperialism. In fact, it legitimizes continued exploitation of these peripheral countries (such as exploitative transnational ownership and production) by defining this process as "natural" and "unchangeable".

By seeking to socialize people of "traditional", "less developed", "under-developed", "third world", "agrarian" and "backward" regions into the process of modernization, the development as modernization model assumes "non-participation of these people" in terms of choosing the goal to which the change effort is directed. Consequently, since the role for NFE is to socialize people into this prescribed system, it can be assumed that people do not really have a choice of educational purpose. In terms of Arnstein's ladder, this is non-participation.

Definition of the Target of Change

Definition of the problem or where one decides to intervene depends on where one perceives the problem to lie. Development as modernism sees the "deficient" individual as the problem and hence the primary point of intervention (modernization theory). As Evans (1981, p. 56) points out, this ". . . approach assumes that if individuals can be changed by modernizing their attitudes, and by giving them skills and knowledge, then they will be able actively to promote development in their own lives and, as groups, in the life of their community." Consequently, NFE programs under this "deficit" philosophy have the goal of providing skills, knowledge and information (the therapy) which are supposed to overcome the "deficit". By defining the target of change for the people as being the people themselves, modernist NFE is explicitly non-participatory in this regard.

The often oppressive social, political and economic structures (local, national and international) in which these "deficient people" are imbedded, escape analysis and action as a possible target for change. Explaining the problem of underdevelopment in "person centered" terms, avoids the need to address the potentially more de-stabilizing prospect of "system-centered" concerns which could appear in one of many forms. These could include, among other possibilities, the historical impacts of colonialism and imperialism or feudalism or the current state of international political and economic relationships such as debt, tied-aid, unfair terms of trade, dependence, transnational corporations and repatriation of profits, structural adjustment and multilateral development, unequal social relations of production in capitalist development and class resistance to change.

Choice of Means Used to Implement the Intervention

A NFE program is a "means" for development and social/individual change, given the prescribed "ends" of development. Consequently, under a modernist perspective of development, NFE programs seek to socialize rural people into the modern mainstream, predominantly through a vocational focus, supported by complimentary areas of varied educational focus (health, literacy, family planning, community economic organization etc.). Since the attempt is to get individuals and their communities to overcome their "deficiencies" through an education that the "modernizing state knows is right" for these people, NFE methods and strategies are centrally (or externally) determined and for the most part, pre-planned and prescriptive, as has already been alluded to (La Belle, 1986).

While program planning, curriculum development and organization for NFE under the modernist rhetoric includes the need for community participation, flexibility in curriculum design and in the teaching/learning process, this is done in order to account for the felt-needs of the community. That is, these participatory attempts are justified not on ethical/moral grounds but in terms of effectiveness for program continuity and long term acceptance (Evans, 1981; La Belle, 1986). This basic orientation flavors all participatory attempts as they relate to curriculum planning, the pedagogical experience and community organization for education. In terms of Arnstein's Ladder (1969), this is participation that is, at worst, non participation (manipulation, therapy) and/or, at best, tokenism (informing, consultation, placation).

At the center of the NFE experience is the facilitator/change agent/nonformal educator. The facilitator is the key external agent who determines the nature of the participatory experience and the degree of control that program participants will exercise. Warwick and Kelman (1970) define four possible participatory/non participatory relationships: (1) coercion (2) environmental manipulation (3) psychic manipulation (4) persuasion and (5) facilitation. While the first three relationships are self-explanatory, the last two are harder to distinguish. They are both most consistent with the notion of participation but in a context where some are more equal than others, real and/or perceived differences in power/status could make facilitation sound more like persuasion or manipulation. Furthermore, often-times, selective reinforcement by an alleged facilitator could really lead to a situation of persuasion/manipulation. Pure facilitation would imply that the interests of the facilitator would not enter the relationship at all -- he/she would be there strictly for guidance.

Given the emphasis of modernist NFE methods on prescription and the underlying behaviorist assumptions about producing individual change for socialization into the dominant process of modernization, "environmental/psychic" manipulation by the "facilitator" are inherent to this approach (see reference to Kunkel, 1970). "Real" (normally physiological) and perceived (felt needs, often created by education/media) deprivations are central to the behaviorist's understanding of the change process. The "facilitator" encourages "participation" in the teaching/learning relationship and in determining curricular needs with a view to better understand "felt needs". What is more, as La Belle (1986, p. 61) states it, " . . . participation in diagnosis and program planning are necessary to make people feel that they are shaping their own future."

Assessment of Consequences

According to Warwick and Kelman (1970), it is a form of ethical irresponsibility to tamper with individual personality or social relationships without knowing or at least considering the by-products and side-effects of the change. Modernist development and NFE, by attempting to socialize people through an intended/unintended emphasis on non-participation and tokenism (Arnstein, 1969), have succeeded in creating situations where the power of one group has strengthened at the expense of another (see "structuralist" critique of modernist development and education); where the creation of "perceived" and "real" deficiencies has led to a rise in aspirations of rural people with very little chance of realizing these aspirations (Evans, 1981; Warwick & Kelman, 1970); and where "traditional-integrative values" of "deficient communities of rural people" have been weakened or destroyed with little or no attention given to the problems of assimilation into the desired modernist cultural and economic mainstream (Warwick & Kelman, 1970).

Since evaluation and assessment of modernist development processes, including NFE as a means/process for modernist socialization, is primarily defined and conducted by those who develop and run these programs for rural participants, such non-participation places the ethical burden of program "consequences" solely on the external agents. From a pragmatic position also, as Evans (1981, p. 57) points out, such evaluations suffer from a myopic view of effectiveness because of the incestuous definition of the entire process of change, including the evaluatory stage. For instance, such person-centered-deficiency-oriented NFE programs generally accept as a sufficient goal and achievement, the development of new information, attitudes and skills in the participants, with little or no evaluation taking place in terms of the applications of these new characteristics outside the educational setting. Success is narrowly defined in terms of the production of specified characteristics in the participants (Kindervatter, 1979). Consequently, " The participants in such programs are generally left with the difficult task of applying their new knowledge and behaviors in a setting whose economic and political structure has in no way changed as a result of their training" (Evans, 1981, p. 57). Furthermore, modernist development and

NFE fails to encourage a self-critical (vis-a-vis assumptions of modernism and effects) stance, thereby continuing to inflict social injustice, environmental degradation, cultural imperialism and moral obsolescence, often ignoring these consequences when engaging in evaluation and assessment of consequences.

CHAPTER 8

THE COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT: AN ASSUMPTIONAL ANALYSIS

Some apparent underlying assumptions of change agent perspectives engaged in the BGKS-Oxfam Community Health Project in Orissa, have been grouped under the following sections: (1) The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Social and Individual Change; (2) The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about the Nature, Role and Method of Education; and (3) The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Education and Participation.

The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Social and Individual Change

Change agents from the BGKS-Oxfam initiative defined the development problem in terms of the nature of dependence, control and mental frames, suggesting that the problem of poverty and underdevelopment was more a process that was being "induced" from outside these "poor communities of people" than something that was endemic to these people themselves, such as the "backward cultural attitudes and behaviors" suggested by modernization theorists. Even the suggestion that these people thought and sometimes behaved in "detrimental ways" (mental frames) was linked to the idea of some kind of "external inducement" that promoted "dependent and fatalistic thinking". The "structures" that were seen to promote "dependence" included governmental delivery systems (PHC and PDS), the government administration/bureaucracy, feudal structures at the village level, religious institutions, multilateral governmental agencies and voluntary agencies. The corresponding "structure" of "dependence" was the "mental frame" induced in the minds and actions of the rural people themselves -- described as a "stagnant position".

The process for changing this situation focused on educating to see the need to "organize for collective action" to change the "structures of dependence" and education to change "stagnant mental frames" -- to achieve a "cultural change" where people "develop their own consciousness" and this process of freeing the consciousness from such frames and blocks was referred to as "empowerment". Change was said to have occurred when (1) mental structures of dependence have been broken and replaced with self-reliance, self-confidence and self-initiative, (2) when the structures of dependence have been molded towards meeting and recognizing the needs of these communities (including the need for self-determination), and (3) the community promotes such process in its own social organizations and relationships.

There are several possible and related assumptions behind this definition of the problem and the associated remedy.

The Relationship of Development (as Modernization) to Underdevelopment: Diffusion as Dependency

"Dependency" is a term that is associated with a group of mainly Latin American (Brazilian and Chilean) writers like Andre Gunder Frank, Theotonio Dos Santos, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Enzo Faletto, Celso Furtado and Osvaldo Sunkel (Blomstrom & Hettne, 1984). While there is a considerable variation in the interpretation and emphasis of "dependency theory", these theorists generally argued that societal development cannot be adequately understood purely in terms of universal stages or psychological processes. Rather, they viewed the overall "structure" of the world capitalist system as one that makes development possible for some countries (and regions within countries) but renders it highly unlikely for others. Those countries that are "dependent" on others are economically, politically, socially and culturally disadvantaged. The following statement, for instance, alludes to the nature of economic dependence as follows:

> By dependence we mean a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected. The relation of interdependence between two or more economies, and between these and world trade, assumes the form of dependence when some countries (the dominant ones) can expand and can be self-sustaining while other countries (the dependent ones) can do this only as a reflection of that expansion. (Dos Santos, 1973, p. 109)

This development perspective is derived from a critical analysis of the modernization perspective of development. Dependency theory provides the basis for an economic critique as part of the general critique provided by "reformists". While, for the theorists of modernization, contact with the industrial world offers the promise of development, for dependency theorists, it is this very contact with the developed world that will ensure continued impoverishment. The assumptions of this model, in its simplest form, are as follows (Allahar, 1989, p. 90; Hettne, 1990; McKay, 1990, p. 55):

(1) The development of the West ("core" countries or "metropoles") could not have taken place without the systematic exploitation of colonies in the Third World ("peripheral" countries or "satellites") and, similarly, the exploitative dealings between core and periphery is not restricted to dealings among countries, but can also characterize the state of affairs within a given country (rural-urban);

(2) The stages of development envisaged by the modernization theorists are an illusion. The existence of an exploitative world system ensures that countries of the Third World cannot follow the development path followed by the rich countries;

(3) Countries that are poor are not in some kind of virgin state of underdevelopment: rather, they have been underdeveloped via a global system of exploitation or an active socioeconomic and political process of promoting dependence,

leading to the establishment of structures and institutions that preempt development (i.e., underdevelopment is not an original state or stage -- while all countries may have been undeveloped at one time, not all have become underdeveloped);

(4) Unlike the dualist/diffusionist approach, which views development and underdevelopment as separate or unrelated phenomena, or at times views the backward sector as a fetter on the modern one, dependency thinkers stress the relational character of these phenomena. The backward sectors or countries are not expected to catch up with the advanced ones when the appropriate institutions and technology are diffused to them. The structures of dependence and underdevelopment that link these sectors together are themselves responsible for the backwardness of one sector and the advancement of the other. That is, dependency thinkers reverse the dualist position to see the modern sectors as the main obstacles to development in the periphery;

(5) This situation is perpetuated because, given their structurally subordinate position within the system of international capitalism, leaders of these peripheral countries come to recognize their class interests as bound up with those of foreign capital and as Frank (1972, pp. 3-15 quoted in Allahar, 1989, p. 91) argues, they "accept dependence consciously and willingly" as "junior partners of foreign capital" and impose policies that increase dependence on the imperialist metropolis.

Structure, Determinism and Free Will

Social evolutionism and modernization theory argue for a positivist ontology in at least two ways: (1) That there is a real world that is independent of our theoretical conceptions of it and (2) That social determinism is as real as biological determinism (organismic metaphor) or that human agency can do nothing to change the "natural course of social evolution" through the inevitable and various stages of growth identified by these theorists. Freire explains this as a "hopeless" point of view that "conspires" to "domesticate history":

> If there is any anguish in director societies hidden beneath the cover of their cold technology it springs from their desperate determination that their metropolitan status be preserved in the future . . . that is why there is no genuine hope in those who intend to make the future repeat the present, nor in those who see the future as something predetermined. Both have a 'domesticated' notion of history: the former because they want to stop time, the latter because they are certain about a future they already know. (1970d, p. 221)

Dependency theorists reject this positivist ontology in favor of a realist ontology that suggests: (1) That reality can never be apprehended without theory and the facts so-to-speak are never theory-neutral. Thus, "that which is real does not necessarily have to possess a material or physical existence, for it is possible theoretically to identify social structures and processes that have a major impact on how we conduct our lives" (Allahar, 1989, p. 82). These "social structures" include, among others, the structure of colonial or neo-colonial subordination, the structure of world trade and imperialism, the structure of state, or the social class structures that predominate in advanced and peripheral countries -- while they may not be directly observable, they are nevertheless "real" in that they have the ability to and do "affect" change in material things and conditions that are amenable to the senses (Allahar, 1989, pp. 82-83).

> Structures are not persons or things. They are not buildings. Not even organizations. Structures are global relations, and relations cannot be seen; they are to society what the mind is to the body; the controlling logic of behavior. (Alvez, 1972, p. 21)

(2) That humans are not prisoners of social structures or stages -- they reject positivistic determinism and in fact, one of the main tasks of social science is to "expose the mechanisms that govern a large part of our behavior, with the understanding that we could actively intervene to modify such structures" (Allahar, 1989, p. 84). That is, wherever social structures are found to limit or distort human fulfillment, they can and must be changed. Recognizing the importance of social structure in molding behavior does not negate the possibility of free will. While physical/biological attributes, the factors of climate and geography and social structure may limit us, this degree of "unfreedom" does not deny the possibility for human agency and free will to change and alter the state of affairs.

> If man is incapable of changing reality, he adjusts himself instead. Adaptation is behavior characteristic of the animal sphere; exhibited by man, it is symptomatic of his dehumanization.
>
> Throughout history men have attempted to overcome the factors which make them accommodate or adjust, in struggle -- constantly threatened by oppression -- to attain their full humanization. (Freire, 1973a, p. 5)

> This humanism refuses both despair and naive optimism, and is thus hopefully critical. Its critical hope rests on an equally critical belief, the belief that human beings can make and remake things, that they can transform the world. A belief then that human beings, by making and remaking things and transforming the world, can transcend the situation in which their state of being is almost a state of non-being, and go on to a state of being, in search of becoming more fully human. (Freire, 1973a, p. 144)

BGKS's organizational objectives sought to explicitly address a need for structural changes in order to improve people's access to "planned public services" and "resources". Some of these objectives (Oxfam Progress Report, 1992) were as follows:

(1) To create an interest, motivation, and socio-political awareness in people, irrespective of caste, religion, language, and sex, in order to lobby the Public Distribution System to render social services to the poor, weak, landless agricultural laborers for their socio-economic development.

(2) To promote new socio-cultural activities like collective village grain banks, seed banks, savings and credit banks, etc., in order to promote a new culture that will counter the exploitative credit system of the the village run by the landlord-money lender-shop keeper trio.

(3) To reclaim wasteland and arrange "pattas" (legal sanction) from the government for the landless agricultural laborers and promote cultivation.

Or, in terms of the Community Health Project, BGKS was aiming to "organize people by making them aware of their health related rights so that they may assert themselves against the apathy of the public health system and the Public Distribution System at large, by making contact with the Public Health Commission and collaborating with them to initiate needed health programs, such as the immunization program (BGKS Proposal, October 1990).

The Organizer for BGKS explained the process of and need for structural transformation, as follows: "People do not have control of their own health because they are waiting for the PHC to do something for them or they are waiting for expensive allopathic drugs from the drug industry. . . . so, if the people don't organize and take control of their health by demanding public services and if they don't realize that they have a traditional medicine which has been working quite effectively for generations -- their own herbal medicines that are right at their doorstep."

Dependency, Cultural Invasion, the Culture of Silence and Critical Consciousness

Change agents from BGKS and Oxfam also extend the idea of dependence to the "mental frame" of the rural participants -- a certain state of "consciousness". Furthermore, they spoke of the demise of "traditional medicinal practice" because of the penetration of modern allopathic medicine into the tribal communities of the BGKS membership.

While "dependency" analysis was based primarily on economics, political-economy and sociology, the theory has been extended to other areas of "diffusion", as in the "cultural areas" of education, aesthetics, values and self-concept, under what has been referred to as a "cultural invasion".

> All domination involves invasion -- at times physical and overt, at times camouflaged, with the invader assuming the role of a helping friend. In the last analysis, invasion is a form of economic and cultural domination. Invasion may be practiced by a metropolitan society upon a dependent society, or it may be implicit in the domination of one class over another within the same society.
>
> Cultural conquest leads to the cultural inauthenticity of those who are invaded; they begin to respond to the values, the standards, and the goals of the invaders. In their passion to dominate, to mold others to their patterns and their way of life, the invaders desire to know how those they have invaded apprehend reality -- but only so they can dominate the latter effectively. In the *cultural invasion* [italics added] it is essential that those who are invaded come to see their reality with the outlook of

> the invaders rather than their own; for the more they mimic the invaders, the more stable the position of the latter becomes.
>
> For the cultural invasion to succeed, it is essential that those invaded become convinced of their intrinsic inferiority. The more invasion is accentuated and those invaded are alienated from the spirit of their own culture and from themselves, the more the latter want to be like the invaders: to walk like them, talk like them. (Freire, 1970a, pp. 150-153)

Or, as a change agent from the BGKS-Oxfam Community Health Project explained it:

> *Because of age long exploitation and social disguise they have been placed into situations where they accept whatever comes into their lives. This is part of our lives and that is how they treat it. They are beyond fatalism because they believe whatever they are told because culturally and socially they have been told and made to believe that you, as untouchables or tribals, are not supposed to do this and this and this and they accept it. They don't just accept it as their fate, they believe that they are supposed to do what they have been told by other groups so, in a way, they are beyond fatalism.*
>
> *My experience with the community suggests that the people have got used to a system where their minds are framed with these things. They cannot break these frames and think beyond. They think that this is the way it is going to be and this is our fate -- very fatalistic -- and they are unable to realize their own strength. They are in a stagnant position as such -- so, in order to break this frame, it is necessary to have a participatory education that makes them responsible for dealing with their problems.*

The result of cultural invasion is the culture of silence.

> The dependent society is by definition *a silent society* [italics added]. Its voice is not an authentic voice, but merely an echo of the voice of the metropolis; in every way the metropolis speaks, the dependent society listens. . . . The dependent society introjects the values and life style of the metropolitan society, since the structure of the latter shapes that of the former. (Freire, 1970b, pp. 459-458)

Under the scheme of the "culture of silence", some are given the right to the "act of saying" while others are "prohibited" from the same and are condemned to being "mute".

> The *culture of silence* [italics added] is born in the relationship between the Third World and the Metropolis. This culture is the result of the structural relation between the dominated and the dominators. Thus, understanding the culture of silence presupposes an analysis of dependence as a rational phenomenon which gives rise to different forms of being, of thinking, of expression, those of the culture of silence and those of the culture which 'has a voice'. (Freire, 1970b, p. 457)

> The 'culture of silence', therefore, is one in which only the power elite exercises the right of choosing, of acting, of commanding without the participation of the popular majority. *The right of saying the word* [italics added] is exclusively theirs. As I said before, Latin American societies constituted as they were by Portuguese and Spanish colonizing action, were born as silent societies. (Freire, 1970c, pp. 4/7-4/8)

> In the 'culture of silence' *the masses are mute* [italics added] that is, they are prohibited from creatively taking part in the transformation of their society and, therefore, prohibited from being. (Freire, 1970d, p. 213)

Or, as a change agent from the BGKS-Oxfam Community Health Project explained it:

> *See, poverty is an obvious problem and we are seeing that people are obviously economically poor. Because people are poor -- if we are going to solve the problems of poverty without taking people into account by not letting them start to think and act on their poor situation -- then what ? Are we going to work in a vacuum -- is such a thing even possible ?*
>
> *We need to have control over our lives. We are all given some control but if that is taken away from you -- if you are dancing to the tune of somebody else then there is no meaning to having a life to your body because you don't have anything of your own, you don't have any vision, you don't have any choice -- whether you go for the better or for the worse. But if you have control, you have choices. Otherwise you are a spectator in your own life because you are living in somebody else's vision for you.*

According to Freire (1970c), in order to understand what is meant by the "culture of silence", it is necessary to appreciate the meaning of the "act of 'saying'" -- and the philosophical meaning of "word".

> If saying the true word implies transforming the world, in which practice men become men and affirm themselves as beings who constantly create and recreate the world, saying the true word also implies becoming subject and not object. Saying the word is to participate, to create, to decide, to be free. Such an act, indispensable if men are to become men, cannot be the privilege of some men only, or some social classes, or some nations only. It is the primordial right of all men. (Freire, 1970c, pp. 4/7-4/8)

Dependent social relations condition a social and individual "consciousness". For instance, the relationship between a lord and his serf presupposes a consciousness of servility and indebtedness vis-a-vis the lord. In turn, the daily exercise of servility conditions the serf's consciousness. "There is a mode of consciousness which corresponds to the concrete reality of such dependent societies. It is a consciousness historically conditioned by the social structures" (Freire, 1970b, p. 461). Freire (1970b) goes on to suggest that this "structurally imposed" form of "closed consciousness", trapped in the "culture of silence", cannot persist indefinitely and an "emerging consciousness" and "structural transformation" will give rise to a new form of "critical consciousness", where people are able to problematize the social reality and to participate actively in its transformation.

As a change agent from BGKS explained:

> *Basic thing is that cultural change takes place and that is more important. Change in attitude, approach and thinking process. The feelings of rights, responsibility and duties -- the internalization of these aspects and acting on it -- this is the most important part for participatory education and rural change.*
>
> *People should develop their own consciousness and livelihood -- that is our intent and not to just talk about material and finance only and tell them what to do about those things. According to me, this process of freeing the consciousness from such frames and blocks is empowerment; empowerment because people now*

> *don't feel that there is something very great about the whole thing and that it's from outside -- they feel that they have been doing all this.*

Reform: Conflict, Equilibrium and Social Articulation

Rural development as modernization is based on the equilibrium theory of social change, where the image is of a benign system that is self-regulating, harmonious and tending toward homeostasis. Dependency theorists tending towards this approach suggest "import substitution and nationalization" of the economy as a solution for "dependency". Similarly, Marxist revolutionary development is based on an anti-thetical social change theory or conflict theory that is based on continual disruption as a necessary and common attribute of a society where relationships are built on power, exploitation, and social contradictions. Dependency theorists tending towards this approach suggest breaking away from the capitalist system and replacing it with a Marxist system. However, a reformist approach views either perspective (equilibrium-capitalist and conflict-Marxist) in isolation, as inadequate and simplistic (La Belle, 1986, p. 54).

The reformist focus is on acquiring economic and political power, when and where deemed necessary (by participant subjects), to ensure maximum possibility for cultural and social articulation by the oppressed and marginalized, as they see necessary. Under this perspective, there are times when system balance and equilibrium can only occur in and through conflict, and conversely, other times when conflict is necessary to reach a new order of equilibrium. Reform draws from both theories of social change (La Belle, 1986, p. 54).

Development as a process of reform, recognizes capitalist exploitation through the political-economy of capitalist organization of the productive process (structures) and suggests that those who are disenfranchised and living on the margins need to organize and confront the systemic and structural injustices perpetuated by those who have control over political and economic resources. Efforts aimed at political goals might confront local and national authorities with demands that can be fulfilled through political decision makers.

However, unlike the Marxist revolutionary push for replacing existing capitalist structures with Marxist structures of political-economy and new relations of production (pre-occupation with modern production oriented political-economy analysis) through continuous conflict (revolution), development as reform postulates a need for cultural re-vitalization through the social-cultural articulation of alternative ways of being and living (these are often dismissed as "traditional" ways, under the dominant capitalist-modernization and Marxist-modernization models) (Hettne, 1990).

Unlike under either modernist-equilibrium or modernist-revolutionary theories of development and social change, a reformist approach to change emphasizes individuals and communities of individuals as the architects of their change -- individuals/communities as subjects who articulate their vision of development and the necessary methods and strategies for achieving social change. The focus is not on adapting and changing individuals/communities to fit the requirements of a social model or system (macro level) -- objectification of the individual -- the focus of change is on "freeing" individuals from such objectification and helping them to become architects of their process of change (community/micro level) -- subjects. If this process involves conflict with existing social-economic-political structures, as it often will, then conflict could become necessary if people are to be as subjects. In this manner, alternative cultural and social articulations reform the dominant configuration and vice-versa (society is democratized).

In terms of the BGKS community health initiative, the organization was promoting the following processes at the same time: (1) a process of cultural articulation/indigenization through the revival of traditional medicinal practice, (2) a process of conflict against a public health system and a government that had failed to ackowledge their needs/rights as human beings and, (3) a process of cooperation with the government, when the program activities initiated by the government addressed needs and demands that were determined as being worthwhile by the community. All these processes are evident in the statement of objectives of the organization and those objectives specific to the Community Health Project (see contextual description in chapter 5).

Development as a Pluralistic and Normative Concept: Another Development

"'Development' is inevitably a normative term and we must ask ourselves what are the necessary conditions for a universally acceptable aim -- the realization of the potential of the human personality" (Seers, 1969, p. 2).

Some of the major assumptions of the reformist approach to rural development are summed up by the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation's definition of "Another Development" (Nerfin, 1977, p. 10). The five components of "another development", normatively speaking, are as follows:

(1) Need-oriented -- material and non-material such as satisfaction of needs for expression, creativity, equality, and conviviality and the need to understand and master one's own destiny;

(2) Endogenous -- pluralism of development (situation specific), stems from the vision and values of each society, non-linear and non-universal;

(3) Self-reliant -- rooted in local level of praxis, collective self-reliance at national and international levels emphasized;

(4) Ecologically sound -- equitable access to resources, recognition of limitations to resources and carrying capacity of the earth and the biosphere, intermediate technologies;

(5) Based on structural transformations -- they are required, more often than not, in social relations, in economic activities, and in their spatial distribution, as well as in the power structure, so as to realize the conditions of self-management and participation in decision-making by all those affected by it, from the rural or urban community to the world as a whole, without which the above goals could not be achieved.

Speaking of "what constitutes development" as opposed to "modernization", Freire emphasizes the importance of "endogenous development" and "self-reliance", stating:

> In order to determine whether or not a society is developing, one must be beyond criteria based on indices of 'per capita' income. . . . The basic, elementary criterion is whether or not the society is "being for itself". If it is not, the other criteria indicate modernization rather than development. . . . it is obvious that only a society which is 'being for itself' can develop. Societies which are dual, 'reflex', invaded and dependent on the metropolitan society cannot develop because they are alienated. (1970a, p. 160)

> Development is the task of a subject and not of an object. This implies the possibility of choosing, of deciding, of planning, and only beings for themselves are able to exercise such action. Development has its point of departure in the very 'heart' of society regardless of their relations with other societies, whereas modernization has its starting point outside the modernizing society. Because of this, modernization meets not only the economic interests of the manipulating societies, but also their ideological interests. . . . technological and economic transformations of the underdeveloped societies are not, in themselves, development, even though such transformations might result in a higher level of welfare. In fact, for an underdeveloped society to be developing, it must be the source of its own decisions about change. Without this condition, society will be merely modernized. The mere modernization of the structures does not give a society the characteristic of "being for itself". (1970c, pp. 4/5-4/6)

Development as a Process of Education for Conscientization (de-mystification), Collective Action and Structural Transformation (and Transformation of Consciousness)

> The option for modernization as against development implies the restriction of cultural freedoms as well as the use of methods and of techniques through which the access to culture would apparently be controlled. It implies an education for the maintenance of the status-quo, preserving the non-participation of the people in whatever process in any field; an education which, instead of unfolding reality, mystifies it and consequently, dominates and adapts man. (Freire, 1970e, p. 173)

> Conscientization represents the development of the awakening of critical awareness. It will not appear as a natural by product of even major economic changes, but must grow out of a critical educational effort based on favorable historical conditions. (Freire, 1973a, p. 19)

> Conscientization is a joint project in that it takes place in a man among other men, men united by their action and by their reflection upon that action and upon the world. (Freire, 1970b, p. 471)

> Education must be an instrument of transforming action, as a political praxis at the service of permanent human liberation. This does not happen only in the

> consciousness of people but presupposes a radical change of structures, in which process, consciousness will itself be transformed. (Freire, 1973b, p. 46)

> Its (education as consciousness-raising) authenticity is at hand only when the practice of the revelation of reality constitutes a dynamic and dialectical unity with the practice of transformation of reality. (Freire, 1994, p. 103)

An interviewee from the BGKS-Oxfam health initiative illustrated this process with the following example:

> *Ours is a long term process because we go and tell them that if they feel water is a problem then this is how they can take the following steps and get water from the government and that it was their right. Related to this practical idea we told them that it would be useful for them to learn to read and write so that they can get their rights like this for themselves.*
>
> *In one case a group came and wanted to get involved with a water provision program for the people near Chilka area. We had been involved in lobbying and organizational pressure tactics for a tube well for the people for one and half years and this group was saying we will give you some well rings -- why don't you let us dig a well in your village ? This was a test for our work and approach -- a hard situation because people cannot resist the temptation of being given something for free. So we approached the community for reflection on this issue and said that if they wished to accept the well-rings from this group it was fine and that they would have to decide. If people accept you in the village then you can be there -- if not, better withdraw. Even though some people were tempted, the village council decided not to accept the offer because they had been working for so long on the PDS and were getting assurances after one year of postcard campaigns, dharnas and saying that they would take away water from government officials, etc. plus water is a basic right that the government was mandated to ensure for them. And they refused that organization and said that we know how to get the water for ourselves.*

The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about the Nature, Role and Method of Education

The Nature and Role of NFE: Education for Liberation, Emancipation and Transformation

The task of education becomes one of "transformation of the individual and society" (from a "dependent social structure and consciousness"), an act of "liberation" and "emancipation" -- from the "domesticating" influence of the process of modernization and "banking education" which services the process of modernization. This is conceived as a process of "humanization", as people begin to create, act and change the conditions (mental and structural) of their situation.

> When education is oriented toward the *preservation of a system* [italics added]-- and educators are not always aware of it -- it is obvious that its task is to *adapt* [italics added] new generations to the social system it serves, which can and must be reformed and modernized, but which will never be *radically transformed* [italics added]. (Freire, 1972, p. 175)

> In this view, man is not a conscious being; he is rather the possessor of a consciousness; an empty mind passively open to the reception of deposits of reality

> from the world outside. Based on a mechanistic, static, naturalistic, specialized view of consciousness, *banking education* [italics added] transforms students into receiving objects. It attempts to *control thinking* [italics added] and action; it leads men to *adjust* [italics added] to the world, and inhibits their creative power. (Freire, 1970a, p. 58)

> Problem-posing education, as a *humanist and liberating* [italics added] praxis, posits as fundamental that men subjected to *domestication* [italics added] must fight for their *emancipation* [italics added]. To that end, it enables teachers and students to become subjects to the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and alienating intellectualism. (Freire, 1970a, p. 74)

> We tend to ignore or to obscure the role of education, which, in that it is a social praxis, will always be in the service either of domestication of men or of their liberation. The inevitable choice we have to make: education as a domesticating praxis and *education as a liberating praxis* [italics added]. (Freire, 1972, p. 174)

As a change agent from BGKS explained:

> *Participatory education for me is, first, developing understanding of the problems. Like suppose somebody is trying to push something that the person thinks is good and beneficial for the community but initially the people don't understand. If it is put before the community and the community gets a chance to analyze it and then it understands, then it will be interested to get involved in it. Otherwise, what happens is that the person who is trying to give that good thing for the community will find it may not be good at all and if he pushes it, people will soon become against this thing. Participatory education first tries to develop understanding on the part of the people of the problem. And this may take lots of time. Secondly, their own decision and willingness to do something through organizing and participatory educators will help them with this one also. Once this is done and they are taking the decision, then they will be willing to do some work, share the responsibilities and bear the consequences, positive or negative. This is participatory education for me.*

NFE Strategy and Method: Individual/Social Transformation and Process

Under this perspective, what is emphasized in terms of NFE strategy and method is a group pedagogy, usually initiated by a facilitator, that seeks to promote horizontal and reciprocal relationships for participants. These relationships are fostered through discussion of concrete historical experiences in a dialogue intended to lead to mutual learning about the participants' social reality (Guerrero, 1981 quoted in La Belle, 1986, p. 170). By confronting family, education, labor, and social problems and generating their own formulations of reality and community activity, the participants are expected to achieve transformed or heightened consciousness (Cariola, 1980 quoted in La Belle, 1986, p. 170). Consciousness raising, although sometimes linked to literacy programs, does not represent a fixed curriculum nor does it aim to integrate the individual into the present society. Instead, it represents a normative process, geared to democratic participation, that juxtaposes a utopian future against contradictions of the present. It assumes that the oppressed have their own set of ideas, born out of their daily struggle for survival (Barreiro, 1974 quoted in La Belle, 1986).

McGinn (1973) summarizes Freire's consciousness-raising method and strategy in terms of the following principles: education cannot be neutral; education should be participatory and must involve self-reflection and critical thought about the individual and society; personal development depends on the individual's mutually influencing relationships with other beings and objects; education must be linked to societal questions, especially to political and economic struggles between social classes; learning cannot occur unless it is accompanied by praxis or a testing out of the new knowledge; and the world that people live in is, for the most part, created by themselves.

For example, Freire's method for literacy training begins with common words and pictorially represented situations from the immediate life of the participants. Through cultural circles, under the leadership of coordinators, individuals carry on a dialogue about their environment as it is and as it could be. As Freire (1970a, p. 62) puts it to coordinators:

> It is almost certain that the group, faced with a situation, will start by describing it in terms of its own existential experience, which may or may not be that of the coordinator. Your role is to seek, with the group, to deepen the analysis until the situation presented, studied as a problem is *criticized* [italics added]. . . . This critical posture, which should be adopted by you and by the group, will overcome a naive consciousness, which loses itself on the periphery of problems as you are convinced that you have arrived at their essence.

Through this format, Freire attempts to avoid what he describes as the "banking" approach to education and he seeks a liberating or awareness-raising process in which discovery through dialogue is realized. The coordinator should not prescribe his or her own options to others because that would be manipulation, which itself leads to dehumanization. Furthermore, the coordinator should continually seek praxis and reflection upon himself/herself as well as others. The result of dialogue is individuals who opt for self and social structural change towards more liberating ways of being.

A change agent from Oxfam tried to explain the educational process of change as follows:

> *One should begin at the level where people are. If you want to build something you build on that. Indigenous knowledge, indigenous practices and understanding village systems, understanding the village -- rather than coming in with your ideas, begin from where they are. And then given that one may have exposure to different things -- change agents come in with different experiences and ideas -- so you can add value, no one is denying that. You have to start at where they are and you have to try and understand why things are the way they are. And as one begins to understand their survival strategy, one begins to understand one's own biases.*

Kindervatter (1979, p. 247) identifies the programmatic and methodological dimensions of an "empowering process" of NFE as follows:

(1) Structure: Emphasis on small group activity and autonomy. Members have a common background and interests, and become a team, with a sense of identity and pride.

(2) Setting/time: Decided upon by learners; informal meeting place in the learner's communities.

(3) Role of learners: Collectively exercise decision-making power, in collaboration with the facilitator, on all aspects of the program. Share leadership as well as other roles and responsibilities. Function as semi-autonomous problem-solving groups.

(4) Role of facilitator: Supports learners in doing things themselves; helps them to structure their own learning experiences. Ideally, from the community of the learners. Non-directive; skilled at problem-posing and questioning which promotes critical analysis.

(5) Relationship of facilitators and learners: Teacher-student status differences de-emphasized. Relationship changes as program progresses: learners become increasingly active and facilitator increasingly less active. Based on mutual respect.

(6) Needs assessment: Needs arise out of learners' real life problems and interests. Identified through a dialogical process amongst learners, and between learners and facilitator. On-going.

(7) Curriculum development: On-going, emergent, open-ended. General objectives established at the outset, but specific objectives and "lesson plans" developed from one session to the next.

(8) Subject matter: Facilitators help learners develop and examine their problems. Based on this analysis, learners determine what they want to learn and identify the resources to do so. Thus, content includes two areas: 1) "process objectives" related to group problem-solving and 2) "content objectives" related to the information, skills, or community action projects which the learners themselves decide to pursue.

(9) Materials: Usually not pre-packaged. Developed by the facilitator and/or learners as a means to stimulate problem identification/analysis; promote self-expression; and support group activities. Includes photos; audio tapes; stories; a group bulletin; charts; mini-lectures, etc. May use books/booklets as resources and packaged "tools" such as games or experiential learning exercises that: are open ended; promote interaction; and require little guidance.

(10) Methods: Structures and small group activities.; discussion; skills development sessions; project planning and implementation. Designed to promote peer group development and autonomy, as well as dialogue. "Fun" methods heighten learner motivation.

(11) Evaluation: Learners continually assess their own development and their effect on their communities, and make necessary program revisions. Learners are not evaluated; they are evaluators in collaboration with the facilitator. Simple tools are utilized, which the learners themselves can apply.

The Education Supervisor in the BGKS-Oxfam health initiative, illustrated the educational process as follows, touching on some of the dimensions referred to above, by Kindervatter:

> *If we are teaching mathematics we start from their home needs and experience -- for example, what are their expenditures for their family or we give them some money from the organization or from their own Children's Fund and they go and buy matches or oil and come and sell in the village. In this way they learn how the process of doing business works also. Children also collect seasonal products like brush stick, firewoods and leaves and sell in the market to raise their funds. This way they learn about business, earn some money for their livelihood, learn mathematics, and about different forest products in their environment. This way, they will do things and then we will talk about that and then do things again and again we talk . . . and this is how we are learning.*

Given the emphasis of reformist NFE on the individual as "subject" and the contradictions inherent to this position in a dominant societal system (modernization perspective) that seeks to "objectify", according to Wallace (1961), the emphasis of such education is on the morality and/or immorality of domination, followed by the need for technical skills (especially in terms of organization) to address injustices. Intellect is still third because of the urgent need to combat attempts by the status-quo to discredit and reveal the inadequacies of such reformist efforts. Consequently, Wallace (1961) argues that reformist NFE pays more attention to consciousness raising vis-a-vis the social structures of domination and the need to develop technical skills for redress, than to intellectual growth.

Education and Individual Change

NFE under a reformist model of development emphasizes a "process" approach to individual change that is heuristically intended to represent a polar opposite to the "prescriptive" approach generally characteristic of modernist NFE programs (La Belle, 1986,p. 60). Its intent is to involve learners in their own teaching/learning for the purpose of either adapting self to society or questioning and changing self and society. The learner is viewed as subject, rather than object, as the "process" approach focuses on the participation of the learner, rather than the teacher or the delivery system. The learner is to participate in the design of the curriculum while the teacher or delivery system is to facilitate that participation. Freire's notion of consciousness raising is an appropriate example, in this regard.

Because the "process" approach emphasizes the active participation of the individual in the diagnosis, design and implementation of teaching and learning, it tends to be aligned to and based on the "psychodynamic", rather than "behaviorist" assumptions pertaining to individual change and places greater emphasis on the "internal state" of learner and teacher than on the learner's "behavior" (La Belle, 1986, p. 67). That is, while psychodynamicists are also dependent on rewarding behaviors, they tend to view the participant as much more active in making his/her own meaning of the situation. Because each individual has an internal state, he/she acts upon the learning environment just as it acts upon him/her. The participant perceives and utilizes what he/she is taught in accordance with his/her own needs, values and cognitive styles (La Belle, 1986, p. 72).

As a change agent from Oxfam explained:

> *If you are going to go and prescribe something, then people are not going to have control over the situation and I have seen that this method does not work.*
>
> *Let people think of their problem, let people analyze their situation and let people have control over their situation because ultimately we are not concerned about the obvious problems -- obvious problems are the symptoms -- our main concern are the people. So, people must have the control -- they are the actors in the process.*

The underlying principle of this approach is one of nurturing the learner's capacity for autonomy and fulfillment (Rogers, 1965) and the assumption that adults have a psychological need to be self-directing and to be perceived as self-directed (Knowles, 1971). Authority, control and covert/overt forms of manipulation are seen to be dysfunctional and contradict the inherent need to be as subjects (facilitator and learner) -- growth is a process of becoming rather than of being shaped. Consciousness is raised when learners confront themselves in their own social reality through obstacles, difficulties, puzzles, or challenges that interest them. The confrontation of self and reality involves designing and testing plausible solutions for problems as perceived by the learners. People will have a desire to change only when they are sufficiently dissatisfied with the images they have of themselves and then, "their problem becomes one of altering their customary behavior, their circumstances, or both, so as to achieve an identity with which they can again be comfortable" (Goodenough, 1963, p. 226). Or as Sanders (1968, p. 8) explains Freire's meaning of consciousness raising,

> a change of *mentality* [italics added] involving an accurate, realistic awareness of one's locus in nature and society; the capacity to analyse critically its causes and consequences, comparing it with other situations and possibilities; and action of a logical sort aimed at transformation.

Reformist NFE programs reflect a more process oriented approach based on the psychodynamic theory of individual change because of the emphasis in these programs on engaging the entire community in the diagnosis of its own reality, with the intent of subsequently promoting its own individual and social transformation (La Belle, 1986, p. 70).

The Reformist Approach to Rural Development: Assumptions about Education and Participation

Education on Participation as a Fundamental Dynamic: Education as Awareness Raising on Participation as Empowerment through People's Contribution and People's Organization

Change agents from the Oxfam-BGKS health initiative spoke of participatory NFE as a process of "breaking mental frames" and "taking collective action" to "change structures of dependence", both within and external to the BGKS community of villages. The process of education was striving to make people "actors" in their lives rather than "spectators".

While the meningitis epidemic was the trigger event and health the galvanizing reason for the Community Health Project, the process of addressing health concerns was primarily a process of education on participation, i.e., awareness raising vis-a-vis the nature of the health system (dependency analysis), attempts to re-educate about indigenous medicinal practice (revival of people's knowledge), the formation of several organizations (organization building) and undertaking several health-related campaigns (awareness raising and education through people's action), both, internally directed and directed at the PHC.

Participation was not simply an element in the project or a means for achieving health or productivity gains -- it was seen to be a fundamental dynamic in that health concerns were being construed as a means for enhancing participation as a long term process of empowerment. Participation as empowerment essentially concerns enabling rural people to decide upon and to take the actions which they believe are essential to their development. People are empowered in the following manner: (1) power through greater confidence in their ability to take action successfully; (2) power in terms of the increasing (more diverse) relations they establish with other organizations, thus broadening their basis of operation; and (3) power as a result of their increasing access to economic resources, e.g., credit and inputs which help their development (Delion, 1986).

Participation as empowerment is essentially an educational process -- education as awareness raising as opposed to education as information. That is, awareness raising education on participation "seeks to break people's mental isolation, to reverse the deeply imbedded feelings of inability and inferiority and to prepare people to explain things as they see them, to speak out, to analyze, to plan and to carry through a course of planned action" (Oakley, 1991, p. 194). This form of education liberates people from the molds of deference and impotence and provides the basis for their active involvement in development (empowering education).

A change agent from BGKS alluded to the process an impact of empowering education in the following manner:

> *This is important because it first of all enhances their thinking. Secondly, once they take the decision to do something, this gives them power and confidence. They feel very positive inside that we can do something by ourselves. They don't need somebody to come and be their savior or to save them. And once they take the decision and start doing something they learn lots of things -- like, for example, they decide to get a tube well from the block (administrative subdivision of the district) and they decide that this will be the committee that will go to the block. They may run 100 times to the block office but it is important that they do this because they learn. Once these people were so scared of the block office -- soon they realize that they can talk, demand, challenge and shout sometimes and they now know how the system works and how to approach it -- all these things are very useful for them. And if the result is positive and they succeed, it enhances their confidence. Even if they fail, they get frustrated and angry with the system. But they learn that when you participate in a democratic process the experience is sometimes bitter. But they also know that through this they can control their own developmental activities, their own resources -- even what comes at the block level they can try and control. They can go and shout, organize "dharna" (protest), things like that -- they can get things done.*

This process of awareness raising education includes an education on participation as people's contribution and people's organization , which are key ingredients in the process of participation as empowerment. People's contribution is, however, not solicited as an input into a predefined, externally managed project design where people's contributions are facilitative of predominantly external contributions but is encouraged as a dynamic for building group solidarity and a spirit of self reliance that are the over-riding concerns of participatory intervention. External contributions are facilitative and secondary to the internal process of contribution. *For instance, the BGKS membership first developed the necessary funding requirement for their project, assessed the maximum available/possible contributions from its membership and then presented Oxfam with a proposal for additional funds (amounted to the equivalent of $5000 or one-third of the projected annual requirement) and a description of the desired role for the external agency, as determined by the membership of BGKS (see chapter 7, section on Participation, Education and the Question of Economic Base -- refer to approach (2) defined by Oakley, 1991, pp. 198-202).*

Similarly, the process of education on participation as organization encourages the formation of organization based upon indigenous patterns of organization; an organic growth process; spontaneous evolution; member's self-management; action linked to tackling exploitative situations; an emphasis on redefining leadership and decision-making in order to avoid repression and an organizational mission that is threatening to existing structures of dependence and domination (Oakley, 1991, p. 190). Education on participation as organization under the reformist approach to development turns the conventional modernization approach upside down and sees organization as intrinsic to the process of participation and not merely as a means to facilitate project implementation (Oakley, 1991, p. 191).

A change agent from Oxfam illustrates the importance of the need for village organization as a goal in its own right, regardless of "other project activities" (organization is not simply an instrument *for facilitating these activities) and the need for people to come to the realization that organizing is in their best interests:*

> *So, even though we went with the idea to organize the village we always kept in mind that it should be people's own idea, not just ours. So, when they tell us about the education/school problem we asked them what they have done about it and then they tell us that they went to the block office and found that they were not getting support, etc. So, we discuss about re-pressurizing the block/PDS and we help fill out forms and send them again to ask about establishing a NFE center but they say we will do it next year. Meantime, we say that since you find this problem to be very interesting, what are you willing to do about it? So, they say that they will provide a house and we agree to pay the cost of a teacher while they provide the educational materials and we will give teaching-learning materials. And then they have village meetings and discussions about what to learn and who to encourage to participate etc. Through this process, over time like I said four years, village organization eventually happened and was accepted by the people as their idea.*

Participation: The Primacy of People and People's Knowledge

Change agents from BGKS discussed the importance of reviving traditional medicinal practice as a viable system of medicine for community members given the rampant exploitation and inadequate provision of services associated with the PHC. Consequently, the Community Health Project emphasized the need to get "vaidyas" (medicine men) interested in attending the group meetings and in documenting and popularizing their cultural practice of medicine.

Furthermore, other agents emphasized the relational characteristics of dealing with people as the central concern in a participatory process and in an education on participation -- the need to build "trusting and non-controlling relationships" and the understanding that "poverty was an obvious problem" or a symptom and what really mattered were the "people" and the need for maintaining the dignity of their process of change by letting them be the architects of the process. Reviving the people's knowledge base, as with the case of health-related knowledge, was also seen to be part of the process of making people the central concern of the rural change process.

Oakley (1991) states that two dominant principles of a strategy of participation include (1) the primacy of people and (2) of people's knowledge. As far as the former is concerned, participatory process is essentially a humanizing process, i.e., "it is consciously based on people, their needs, their analysis of issues and their decisions" (p. 161). The primacy of people is affirmed through viewing participation as a moral imperative, a means and a desirable end (as opposed to the instrumentalization of participation as an input that improves the effectiveness of projects designed to assimilate people into an externally determined process):

> The poor and the social outcasts need dignity as much as they need bread, and they should not have to sacrifice their dignity in their quest for bread; and dignity is ultimately sought in order to pursue higher purposes -- it is not enough to die in dignity, one must also have dignity to define how and for what one shall live. (Goulet, 1971, p. 21)

It also implies an implicit faith that people, whatever the condition of their poverty and oppression, can progressively transform their environment with the help of, but not dominated by, external change agents. In essence, as Sethi (1987, p. 52) points out, participatory development demands that rural people move from being objects to becoming subjects of development projects:

> Conventional modes of rural development, explicitly or implicitly, treat people as objects of change and the relation between the development agent and the people often takes the form of a subject acting upon an object; (rural) people have been told what to do. The outcome is a delivery approach -- that is, an attempt to bring development to people through deliveries of knowledge and resources from outside.

Or, as Alinsky (undated, pp. 8-9) expresses it, the guiding star (purpose) of participation is embraced in those words, "the dignity of the individual".

> We learn that when we respect the dignity of the people we work with that they cannot be denied the elementary right to participate as fully as possible in the working out of their own problems. That they must have that vital self-respect which arises out of their having played an active role in resolving their own crises rather than being in the degraded position of being helpless puppet-like recipients of special private or public services. To give people help without their having played a significant part in the action makes the help itself relatively valueless and contributes nothing to the development of the individual that you are ostensibly "helping".

As pointed out in the above statements, if people are not to be seen as objects, then their knowledge must be the appropriate base for development action as is the knowledge brought in by change agents. Participatory development argues for the creative tension between two knowledge streams, namely rural people's essentially experiential knowledge and the formal (often scientific) formal knowledge from outside. While the principle of people's knowledge is widely acknowledged in the literature (especially in the areas of health care, artisan production and irrigation control), it gives a false impression of its acceptance in practice. "Decades of scientifically conducted research and higher-level professional training will need to be radically altered if the principle is to become firmly embedded in development practice" (Oakley, 1991, p. 163). Nandy (1987) and Rahnema (1990) explain what this "radical alteration" might entail:

> I should like to believe that the task of a person living a life of the mind is to make greater demands on those who mouth the certitudes of their times and are closer to the powerful and the rich, than on the faiths and ideas of the powerless and the marginalised. That way lies freedom, compassion and justice. (p. 123)
>
> We assume that we know who 'we' are, who 'they' are, and what can and should be done to change 'them' for the better. 'They' never make such assumptions. Because of that, it seldom comes to our mind that perhaps we need to change, more than anyone else. The world would be in much better shape, indeed, were we to realize that such a change should be the first and the most important point on our agenda. (pp. 213-214)

Education on Participation as a Conscious and Deliberate Process

Change agents from the Oxfam-BGKS initiative talked about a conscious educational process and deliberate structured attempts to encourage people's participation as the primary objective of their intervention. From "intervention" to "maintenance" and "detachment" and through "first contact", the "people's request to intervene" and the on-going process of "critical analysis of their problems", "recognizing the need to organize", taking small concrete/tangible actions to change problematic situations and then finally, tackling larger problems pertaining to structural change -- these change agents had a sense of and discussed an educational process of encouraging participation as the reason for their intervention.

According to Oakley (1991), projects where participation is a "fundamental dynamic", as opposed to an input or one element or means, assume that participation cannot simply be announced or assumed in project activities; rather, there is a suggestion that it is a constructive process and demands its own series of activities designed to help it develop. The common thread running through most efforts at participatory intervention processes is as follows: the move from some initial contact with the people, through a period of activities designed to develop and structure participation to a stage where it is assumed that the basis for continuing participation has been achieved. This is in marked contrast to those projects which view participation "as an extra ingredient which can merely be added to an existing cake" (Oakley, 1991, p. 174).

Reform, NFE and Participation: An Ethical Evaluation of the Rural Change Process

Keeping in mind the conceptual frameworks of Warwick and Kelman (1976) and Arnstein (1969) employed in the corresponding section of the assumptional analysis conducted in chapter 7, the following analysis is similarly applied here to the preceding discussion on assumptions underlying a reformist approach to rural development, NFE and participation.

Choice of Goals to which the Change Effort is Directed

The reformist approach to rural development seeks to "redress" the inherent "non-participation" of the dominant modernization approach and make "people's participation" its choice of goal to which the change effort is directed. Consequently, the process of change and development is the process of encouraging and enabling people, who have been disabled in this regard by the dominant modernization effort (become dependent), to learn to become active participants again. According to the rhetoric, the purpose of NFE under this perspective is to work with people to help them become active agents of their own desired choice of goal for the process of change. Under this approach to development and its related role for NFE, participation is both the means and the ends for change. As a truism, this would amount to "participation" in terms of Arnstein's ladder.

Definition of the Target of Change

Reformist development also emphasizes the individual as the target of change but in terms of ". . . a long historical psychological dependence that has made individuals incapable of freeing themselves from the structure which is the primary cause of their poverty" (Evans, 1981, p. 56). Consequently, reformist NFE programs are ". . . intended to produce a new type of person who is critically aware of the forces acting on his/her life, and who can gradually free himself from the psychological dependence which supports the continued existence of the current structure" (Evans, 1981, p. 57) Such a perspective also implies a need for "therapy" and consequently amounts to non-participation in terms of Arnstein's ladder. However, a reformist critique includes, both, the psycho-social and the social structural (like the political-economic structures of domination) as targets of change (system blame as opposed to person blame). Furthermore, the broader question of the "choice of goals for change" places people in control of defining their goals for change and even though a "therapeutic" approach is evident, the therapy is essentially focused on "people taking control of their own lives" as the best "therapy for people". As Kindervatter (1979) points out, most of the NFE programs under the modernist perspective focus on changing the behavior and attitudes of people while ignoring the socio-economic structures that help shape behavior. In terms of the rhetoric, reformist NFE, however, attempts to develop a critical understanding of the interplay between individuals, institutions and the environment in the process of change.

Theoretically, however, the very act of intervention "targets a group of people" for change through NFE and this process is inherently "therapeutic", whatever the ideology that helps to define the means and ends of the intended intervention. Reformist NFE, while focused on targeting the individual and the system as the points of intervention, does so in "partnership" with the people. Consequently, in terms of Arnstein's Ladder, this could be described as a participatory relationship at the level of "partnership" at best, or as "informing" and "therapeutic", at worst. In an ideal participatory world, there would be no need for such "social change intervention".

Choice of Means used to Implement the Intervention

Reformist NFE programs seek to promote social/individual change through breaking the "dependency" of individuals and their communities on the dominant modernist development process -- that is, these programs see the individuals and their communities as active subjects who can and ought to be "articulating" their own cultural position and definition of education and change. The focus of such NFE programs is on encouraging people to engage in critical reflection and praxis vis-a-vis "dependencies" on the dominant system and self-reflective critique on the nature of dependency and human objectification (Evans, 1981; La Belle, 1986). Community organization for social action, economic cooperation for material self-reliance, agitation to pressure unjust systemic barriers that constrain a self-defined community development process, and health, literacy, and vocational programs that are guided and organized by the community for its own development (not for meeting externally determined systemic needs) are some examples of NFE program focuses (Kindervatter, 1979). Since the interest of these programs is to get people to take charge of their own process of change and overcome "dependence", the NFE strategies and methods strive to emphasize community initiative and are process focused, as has already been alluded to (La Belle, 1986).

Curriculum planning is open-ended and emergent, for the most part, along with evolving community needs and understanding of problematic situations. The pedagogical relationship emphasizes a student-centered experience and the need for learning to take place through reflection and concrete actions to transform community conditions. While issues concerning participatory process may be prescribed or encouraged, the content of what is learnt is decided by the community with the help of the facilitator. Organization and planning is a shared responsibility and so is leadership. Every element of NFE method and strategy seeks to provide an opportunity for community definition and expression with the guidance of a facilitator committed to freeing participants from "dependency" by encouraging self-expression in thought and action (Kindervatter, 1979). In terms of Arnstein's Ladder (1969), this is participation as citizen power (partnership, delegated power, citizen control) because participation is an inherent moral position under the reformist perspective on development and education. That is, participation is seen to be a desirable moral end in itself -- as opposed to an instrumental effectiveness based rationale that views participation as a means for achieving a pre-determined end, namely, assimilation into the mold of modern person capable of meeting the requirements of a modern system.

At the center of the NFE experience is the facilitator/change agent/nonformal educator. The facilitator is the key external agent who determines the nature of the participatory experience and the degree of control that program participants will exercise. Warwick and Kelman (1976) define four possible participatory/nonparticipatory relationships between the agent and the rural participant: (1) coercion (2) environmental manipulation (3) psychic manipulation (4) persuasion and (5) facilitation.

Reformist NFE emphasizes a process orientation that seeks to provide every individual and his/her community with the opportunity to define their own process of change and development. Based on assumptions akin to the psycho-dynamic theory of individual change, the focus is on the "internal state" of each person and change is possible only when people truly understand that they are the architects of their own lives and that "dependency" on an inherently unjust system that purportedly seeks their objectification/control, cannot free them to create their lives with the dignity that comes with being a "subject" (La Belle, 1986). In the quest to "break dependency", persuasion, if not subtler forms of manipulation (such as selective reinforcement for certain ideas), are likely forms of relationship. However, as the community initiates its group process, this relationship is more likely to gravitate towards a state of facilitation (Warwick & Kelman, 1976). The potential for prescription in this relationship is with regard to the need for people to realize the importance of group process and organization for social action and this is likely to be accentuated in the initial stages of the relationship, when participants are seen to be "dependent" and in need of "self and system critique" to break this cycle. The nature of the participatory relationship between the change agent and the participant, under a reformist approach to rural development and NFE, is best summed up by Franklin (1976, p. 355) and is as follows:

> Empathy is a more appropriate characteristic for the CCE (community change educator). It encompasses positive feeling for the client group and an understanding of client difficulties. Still, the CCE retains a delicate detachment from the group, a marginality that allows him to be with but not of. He is accepted

> as trustworthy across class, interest, and ethnic boundaries, yet a part of him stays uncommitted to the client-as-is and committed instead to the client's capacity for development. . . . He is a generalist in terms of the problem, a specialist in terms of the process.

Assessment of Consequences

A reformist approach to rural development and NFE seeks to make people the architects of their own change process. The assessment of consequences and the ethical responsibility falls on both, the change agents and the participants, since the rhetoric suggests that the two parties are engaged in a partnership. However, while this is a more holistic approach, given that it emphasizes the link between individuals, institutions and the environment when considering the process of individual and societal change, the potential for frustration of efforts and the primarily unyielding nature of structures of domination could lead to consequences whereby participant's expectations and achievements are not in balance (Evans, 1981; La Belle, 1986). Furthermore, while attempting to encourage people to confront the structures of domination, the unintended/intended use of violence and coercion may well trigger a backlash that is detrimental to the very existence of a community that seeks to live as "subjects". Structural confrontation could lead to co-optation by mass-based revolutionary struggles that could lead to other forms of objectification of individual and community, thereby defeating the very purpose of seeking freedom to live as "subjects" (La Belle, 1986).

CHAPTER 9

TOWARDS A PARTICIPATORY PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION AND RURAL CHANGE

Change agent perspectives on participatory NFE and rural change process (presented in Chapters 4 through 6) and the literature on international/rural development, NFE and participation that has been selected to develop meanings and understandings forwarded by these change agents (presented in Chapters 7 and 8) provide some indication about what would need to be considered in developing a "participatory perspective on education and rural change", which is the subject of this chapter. This perspective is presented in the form of "propositions", in keeping with the "reflective" and "interpretive" nature of this study. Consequently, there are no claims being made here concerning the "universality" of the presented formulation nor is there a suggestion being made in any way that these are the "facts" of participation, education and rural change. However, the presented perpective may be interpreted as one possible perspective among others. It is a perspective that has been informed by practitioners and theoreticians alike, as part of a reflective search for an improved chance of existence for the majority of humankind who suffer the daily physical deprivations and indignity of poverty. It is part of a reflective search that seeks to awaken the apathetic and/or dominating "minority" that fails to or refuses to see its role in perpetuating this social crisis of existence.

There are twelve "propositions" that have been grouped in three sections as follows: (1) Issues and Propositions on Participation, (2) Issues and Propositions on Education for Participation (or participatory education) and (3) Issues and Propositions on Participatory Education and Rural Change. These categories have been chosen from the defined subject areas addressed in the purpose for undertaking this research, namely, to develop a participatory perspective on education and rural change. The categories are not impermeable and, in fact, demonstrate a considerable degree of overlap.

Issues and Propositions on Participation

Issue One: What is the Development Problem ?

Regardless of the particular approach to rural development, there appears to be a general impression that the rural poor need to take greater initiative in addressing their common concerns. Whether it is because such active involvement could motivate and mobilize people to join and sustain externally conceived projects for their development or because active involvement breaks the mental frames of dependence and encourages people to confront those that have marginalized them, the "people's initiative" is seen to be "lacking" or "absent" -- the development problem, for the most part, is conceived as a state of non-participation.

That is, rather than adopting more "passive" positions such as "accepting their lot" or "continually waiting for external forces to motivate and direct them" out of their problems, people need to play an "active" part in resolving their crisis. However, the different approaches to rural development differ on the question of how and why they are in this crisis and consequently of how and why they should "act" in resolving their own crisis. But the common concern is with a state of rural non-participation.

Proposition one: Constructing the development problem emphasizes the role of a state of non-participation by rural people in addressing their common concerns.

Issue Two: What is Participation ?

A state of non-participation implies that people are failing due to certain obstacles (the interpretations of these obstacles differ, depending on the particular approach to rural development), to realize what it is they need to, can and/or wish to realize. This process of "realization" could include, for instance, the "need" to address physiological concerns like food, water, clothing and shelter or the desire to live by one's "cultural values". Consequently, people are unable to realize their "full potential" (as defined by the individual or their specific cultural group) as human subjects, actively choosing not only "what" they will live for (self-determination) but also "how" they will go about doing this (self-reliance). Participation, then, is a process that seeks to reverse this process, aiming to help people realize their "full potential" by overcoming the obstacles to such realization.

Potential obstacles to participation include: (1) personal psycho-social dispositions of fatalism, dependence, inertia, apathy and physical deprivation or lack of provision for physiological needs (water, food, clothing, shelter) etc., (2) community structures that promote dependence and control (e.g., casteism or gender biases), (3) local-regional feudal structures (e.g., landlord-moneylender-shopkeeper nexus), (4) paternalistic NGOs and their change agents (e.g., evangelical religious NGOs or party/political secular NGOs), (5) governmental structures (in the case of a dominating and controlling bureaucratic and/or administrative, economic, political, social, legal and cultural structures and relationships), and (6) international governments, international business and multilateral development agencies (in the case of dominating and controlling international political, economic, social, legal, militarial and cultural structures and relationships).

Proposition two: Participation is a process for realizing the full potential of people as subjects and the overcoming of obstacles to this process.

In emphasizing participation as a process for realizing the full potential of human beings and overcoming the obstacles to this process, two sub-propositions need to be emphasized here as follows:

Sub-proposition two (a): Participation is a process that affirms people's inherent need for self-determination and self-reliance. That is, people, in accordance with their personal/cultural definition, as subjects, decide what "full potential" is and to what end this process of realization of their potential is to lead to. Other people's definitions of "full potential" cannot be imposed as a yardstick, as though they were generic and culturally-historically non-specific. Such an imposition denies self-determination and reduces participation to a judgmental ethnocentric exercise in "control" and "domination", with the promise of the illusion of "freedom" and "participation", when the process of "assimilation" is entrenched.

Affirming self-determination is to recognize this need with respect to all human spheres which include, among other possibilities, the physical, the mental, the emotional, the spiritual, the cultural (includes education and art/aesthetics), the political, the economic and the social. Related to the concept of self-determination is the importance of the concept of self-reliance or people's reliance on their own skills, knowledge, resources/finances, confidence and abilities to realize what it is that they have "determined" to be a worthy pursuit. While the process of participation teaches the importance of self-reliance, it does not seek to negate the possibility for interaction and exchange in all the afore mentioned areas, i.e., self-reliance is not confused with self-sufficiency. However, what is questioned is the matter of "how" (e.g. paternalistic and controlling), "why" (for domination, exploitation and acquisition of power) and on whose terms such exchanges (of material, knowledge, values etc.) take place -- the relational attributes of the change process engendered by the interaction and interdependence of different cultural groups is brought into question, rather than the "content" or "what" is exchanged. This should become more apparent as the remaining propositions are presented. Furthermore, for those communities that seek isolation and manage to live within their own means (are self-sufficient by their own choice/standard), their need for self-determination is affirmed in a participatory process.

Sub-proposition two (b): Participation is a process that re-distributes cultural, economic, political and social power. In attempting to overcome the obstacles to realizing the full potential of people, participation also becomes a process of "re-distributing power" between those that are "obstructed" and those that "obstruct", thereby "freeing" both groups from their situation of "non-participation" and "unfulfilled condition". The process of participation seeks to encourage cultural pluralism to save people from the twin states of non-participation, cultural arrogance and cultural domination; it encourages the redistribution of material means and provision from those captivated by greed to those captured by need; it seeks to organize the unorganized so that various social groups may be better equipped to understand the merits of cooperation and the futility of domination; and, finally, it seeks to empower the weak by disempowering the dominating, so that society at large is strengthened and less dysfunctional as a consequence of the power game.

Issue Three: What Defines the Participatory Process ?

Participation is essentially a group process in the following ways: (1) as a process, it relies on developing mutual understanding, (2) it is a process of collective action and contribution and (3) participation requires a common effort since obstacles to participation are a common creation (by all groups -- dominators and dominated).

Proposition three: Participation is an interdependent group process.

Sub-proposition three (a): Participation is a mutual process of understanding. First, in recognizing one's need to participate in the creation of one's life and its meaning, to struggle to achieve one's full potential, you recognize this as a need for every other person as well. In fact, without this recognition, it will not be possible to create the external (social structural) and internal (psycho-social) conditions necessary to facilitate the process of living as subjects, as one person's non-participation becomes an obstacle to the next person's participatory process. This is precisely the case when one group seeks to "dominate" and "reduce" another group to a tool for meeting its own ends -- both groups are reduced to non-participatory states of being in that the former falls victim to a process that aims to increase power at any cost (dehumanization of self and other) while the latter is victimized (by the dominator and by a self-perpetuating sense of alienation and despair). While in material and tangible terms, the dominator makes conspicuous gains, the intangible processes (mental, emotional, spiritual, intuitive) blur the distinction of victimizer and victim, as both are consumed by a process of "dehumanization", a process of non-participation that denies the process of striving to attain one's full potential.

Sub-proposition three (b): Participation is a process of collective action and collective contribution. Second, as has been alluded to already, the process of participation incorporates a sense of mutuality or positive symbiosis (as opposed to a negative symbiosis of mutual degradation referred to in the above scenario), as people help each other realize their quest for completion, just as people are capable of obstructing this process, for others and for themselves. Recognition of the above point implies the need to direct group action at the process of individual completion and at obstacles to this process -- consequently, participation emphasizes acts of organization on the part of the weak and unorganized to "deter" (through disempowering the too powerful and empowering the weak) and "educate" those that have all the strength from being organized. Participation emphasizes group contributions in time, money, material, labor, effort and knowledge to make it possible for weaker individuals to begin a process of creation and self-development. Above all, in normative terms, participatory process recognizes the inseparable link between the dominated and the dominators, calling on both to change the deadlock of non-participation -- a process that seeks to free both groups from their dehumanized state.

Sub-proposition three (c): Participation requires a common effort since the obstacles to participation are a common creation. Third, participation is a group process in that it involves a necessary interaction between several different groups in order to make the process possible. At the level of the rural community, women's organizations and children's organizations (among other possibilities) help to remove the obstacles to the process of participation for these relatively weaker individuals while community and regional level organizations aid a similar process when dealing with the larger social structures that the community is imbedded in. Similarly, external agencies and agents in the form of NGOs, governmental agencies and international agencies can facilitate a process of participation provided they share or are genuinely part of a process that seeks this common understanding of the participatory endeavor. If a mutual relationship becomes a possibility or there is even a conscientious attempt to move in a different direction that is being outlined here, then these external agencies begin to address the state of non-participation, not just of the rural poor but more importantly, of themselves and their own constituents, as dominators engaged in a process of changing consciousness. Otherwise, the process of participation can only be championed by the poor, the weak and the dominated and if they have, as Paulo Freire suggests, inherited the image of their oppressors and fail to find the strength to break free of these shackles, then they too cannot carry the responsibility for this process as they will merely reproduce that which they have inherited. Consequently, the cycle of non-participation continues. That is, in the final analysis, the process of participation is a group process because it requires that all "different groups" (from within and external to marginalized communities) need to address a "common problem of common creation" -- the current state of non-participation. The process of change can be a mutually reinforcing process for all groups alike.

Proposition four: Participation is a process of building non-controlling and trusting relationships. At its simplest and most pertinent manifestation, participation is a process of building non-controlling and trusting relationships between people, regardless of what might appear to make them different --

age, gender, race, culture, religion, social class, economic position, political position, geographical location etc. Participation is a process which seeks to reverse the consciousness and corresponding social structures that capture the dominators and the dominated; a consciousness and social structure that drives relationships between individuals, groups and societies into a Machiavellian state of non-participation -- concretizing and propagating the illusion of a social determinism that suggests "this is an immutable state of affairs" and the "only way we can be".

It becomes possible to realize such relationship only if the above mentioned propositions are understood and accepted into practice. Controlling, power-centered, manipulative and instrumentally-based/justified relationships (in, for instance, social change process, educational/pedagogical process and/or daily patterns of communication) can only be changed if one recognizes and understands participation as a process that affirms self-determination and the individual's inherent need to be as subjects/agents and creators of their own change process, challenges all obstacles to this process of individual realization (including non-participatory relationships) and emphasizes the interdependent/group-oriented nature of the process. Understanding these interrelated propositions makes it possible to build participatory relationships that are non-controlling, trusting and mutual.

Proposition five: Participation is an educational process -- participatory education is an education on participation and participatory processes. People's participation in the social and individual change process does not come into existence because project agents have acknowledged the importance and the need for people's participation in rural development projects. Participation is taught and learnt through a conscious and deliberate process of education -- an education that seeks to contribute to a process of change aimed at alleviating an individual and collective condition of poverty and non-participation.

A state of non-participation persists because (among the various other obstacles to participation) certain psycho-social blocks or mental dispositions constrain the individual from participating. An educational process aimed at raising awareness seeks to replace this mental obstacle to participation with notions of self-reliance and self-determination. Since these mental blocks are inseparably linked to social structures that perpetuate such thinking and social structures (deliberate and incidental) are human creations that control, govern, regulate, channel, facilitate or simply affect human behavior and understandings of what is possible and what is not (relational power processes), an education that raises awareness pertaining to the role of these structures in blocking participatory process and the possible avenues (such as people's organization) for redressing the adverse impacts, again, helps to mold and/or eradicate social structural obstacles to participatory process.

Sub-proposition five (a): Material/Financial inputs are instrumental in an educational process that encourages people's participation. As suggested above, participation is primarily a process of education aimed at de-mystifying and exposing the obstacles to participatory process or the conditions that perpetuate a state of non-participation. Material, financial and/or physical obstacles to people's participation are seen to be symptomatic of the controlling social structural and psycho-social obstacles that help to perpetuate these symptoms. Therefore, participatory process seeks to address material obstacles through an educational process that raises awareness in the manner just alluded to.

However, this is primarily a matter of emphasis, as participatory process also addresses material concerns and obstacles to participation by emphasizing people's contributions (includes material and financial) as part of the educational emphasis on the concepts of self-reliance and self-determination and the educational emphasis on the possibility of domination, when the primary source of material and finance is externally based. Furthermore, external financing and materials are injected into the community participatory process, as a "facilitative mechanism" (not the primary emphasis of a project) or a means that enhances the possibilities for "participatory process".

Proposition six: Participation is a process of integration. Participation is a process that attempts to integrate several processes that are otherwise viewed and acted upon as separate.

Sub-proposition six (a): Participation integrates the personal, relational, organizational and societal. For instance, participation is a process that integrates the realms of the personal, the relational, the organizational and the societal, attempting to create an individual and a social structural environment that is mutually reinforcing of the inherent and fundamental need to recognize humans as subjects. As subjects, people need to have control over the process of creating their desired way of being and, conversely, they recognize this as the need of others. So, relationship and structures must be molded to reflect this personal disposition and understanding. Since personal disposition, relationships and organizational and social structures are not adequate in this respect (the development problem), the desired end of participatory process is the creation of individuals, relationships, organizational and social structures that recognize the inherent need for humans to be as subjects.

Sub-proposition six (b): Participation integrates the changer and those being changed, the dominator and the dominated. In this process, change agents and those who they are allegedly changing are actually integrated in a process of mutual transformation. Furthermore, the process of change envisioned in a participatory process calls for changes on the part of the dominators and the dominated.

Sub-proposition six (c): Participation integrates the material and the mental. Participatory process integrates the need to address material dependence and mental dependence. Both forms of inter-related dependency are unacceptable because they create conditions that control and objectify the individual, thereby denying the inherent need to be as subjects. Development that seeks to remedy material deprivation without taking into consideration the impact on individual and communal mental dispositions and attitudes vis-a-vis themselves and the change agents, fails to recognize the extent/magnitude of the problem.

Sub-proposition six (d): Participation integrates the means and the ends. Finally, participatory process integrates the means and the end of social and individual change process unlike instrumental/effectiveness based approaches to change. That is, one engages in participatory process/means in order to become participating individuals in a participatory society. The means cannot negate the ends in that non-participatory methods cannot be utilized to achieve participatory ends. For a more detailed discussion on the unity of means and ends, see Chapter 6, the section on The Desirability of Participatory NFE, Reflections on Questions of Ethics and Effectiveness.

Issues and Propositions on Education for Participation (or Participatory Education)

Issue Four: What is the Content of Participatory Education ?

Education on participation in the rural change process (participatory education) is a conscious and deliberate process of education that aims to bring about individual and social change in the lives of the rural poor and those that have been marginalized in the process of modernization. Participatory education attempts to accomplish this process through an educational effort that "discloses the state of non-participation" and the "dynamics of non-participation" in relation to the marginalized condition of the rural poor. That is, participatory education is education as "awareness raising" vis-a-vis the following social/human processes of "non-participation": (1) social structures of non-participation, (2) psycho-social (mental) non-participation and (3) non-participatory relationship in personal, relational (two or more people), organizational and societal interactions. To become consciously aware of such "non-participation" is a process of empowerment, as people have become more aware of what might be perpetuating their condition of dependence and deprivation.

Raising awareness regarding "non-participation", through this critical process of education, also builds awareness for an emerging strategy for participation and participatory process (again, awareness raising is seen to serve an empowering function). Consequently, awareness raising education also includes: (4) raising aspirations and understanding of the importance of self-determination and self-reliance, (5) thereby emphasizing people's contribution to educational content, people's knowledge is revitalized/promoted/encouraged, (6) the need and method (which builds on indigenous methods of organization) for people's organization as a part of a people's participatory movement for bringing about change in their depressed circumstance and (7) finally, an education on raising awareness vis-a-vis the need for building non-controlling and trusting relationship in their own relationships/organizations and interactions with others. While these features of what is being referred to here as educational content, are focused on the rural participant, awareness raising education also (8) emphasizes the need for change agents facilitating the process to learn from people's knowledge being cultivated through the process and to learn about the dynamics of the foci developed here, through a self-critical and reflective approach to this entire process. The change process is a mutual endeavor.

Proposition seven: The educational content of participatory education is an education on awareness raising.

Sub-proposition seven (a): Education as information facilitates the process of education as awareness raising. Education as information can be empowering, if it is subject to the over-riding importance of the above content of participatory education, i.e., it serves a "facilitating role" in the broader and more fundamental process of education as awareness raising. Otherwise, the mere provision of "knowledge, ideas and information" can serve an alienating function as people are relegated to the passive role of receivers of information -- banking education.

The content of education as information in the process of facilitating education as awareness raising, is wide ranging and could include (among other possibilities): (1) economic/political/legal information, (2) technical information in the areas of health, agriculture, vocations, income generation, environment and literacy, (3) organizational methods and processes and (4) methods of scientific analysis and application. However, the introduction of such packaged information from sources external to the community is not just subject to the fundamental dynamic of education as awareness raising but also to the educational process outlined below.

Issue Five: What is the Process of Participatory Education ?

The separation of educational process and content in participatory education is a forced distinction for the purpose of conceptual clarity. However, as a process encouraging and teaching participation, participatory education is a process of integration as has been suggested in Proposition Six, as regards the process of participation. That is, participatory education teaches about dependency, about the need to and how to organize and about the nature and importance of participatory relationships (content of education) through a process that demonstrates (in action) the nature of self-determination and self-reliance, the manner in which to organize and the manner in which to relate -- there is an attempted integration of educational process and content. For instance, it is an education on how to organize (content) through the act of organizing itself (part of educational process) or the type of relationship to be encouraged (content) is the type of relationship that change agents and participants promote in their interaction (during the educational process). In fact, in terms of the more encompassing dynamic of education for rural change, education for change is not separated from the act of trying to realize the change -- the two processes are occurring simultaneously.

Proposition eight: The educational process of participatory education is a process of integration of educational content and process.

Sub-proposition eight (a): The educational process encourages an evolving content which is based on participant needs and "existence rationality" and the process of reflection and action. Educational process encourages an open-ended approach to what needs to be learnt, when it comes to education as information (content). The content of education in this regard, evolves based on participant needs and is derived from people's experiential knowledge, the change agent's experience and formal training/knowledge and learning from reflecting and acting or the learning that comes from concrete actions/experience to change community conditions.

This process of evolving educational content is shaped by participant needs, the acceptability and ability of participants to integrate new/unfamiliar forms of knowledge and information into their "existence rationality" (Denis Goulet's term) and finally, the test of reflection-action to bring about change. Knowledge and information derive their utility from being able to bring about change in oppressive conditions.

Sub-proposition eight (b): The educational process is a group process which encourages dialogue that evolves through questioning and problematizing shared perspectives. Educational process as "evolving content" (based on the criteria/processes referred to above) can only be realized in group situations that encourage dialogue through questioning and problematizing (as opposed to problem-solving) shared perspectives -- a process of joint reflection that seeks to move understanding beyond what each person (participatory educator and participant) might know as an individual. Again, process and content are integrated as "participatory educators" and "participants" are encouraged to learn about non-controlling and trusting relationships through the practice of such relationship in these dialogical encounters.

Issue Six: Who are the Participatory Educators ?

Participatory educators/teachers are the change agents themselves, especially in terms of education relating to awareness raising activities and processes and in maintaining the participatory process as a fundamental dynamic in any activity related to the desired direction and method for change. In this manner, they may be seen as Community Change Educators (CCE) or "keepers of the participatory process" during any process of intervention. Often, these agents also have "informational expertise" in some of the "content areas" referred to above as "education as information".

CCEs are responsible for the entire process of intervention from first contact, awareness raising education, maintenance of participatory process and action and detachment from the community, once the desired participatory approach to individual and social change has established itself. The CCE teaches through doing, through example and consciously struggles to avoid becoming a "structure of domination and dependence". This is made possible by keeping in mind the outlined propositions and by being self-reflective and self-critical and constantly vigilant of the need to remember that the process of change that is taking place is a mutual process and therefore lends no cause for arrogance or for control and objectification of the rural participant.

Proposition nine: Participatory educators are change agents as community change educators (CCE).

Issues and Propositions on Participatory Education and Rural Change

The following propositions describe what is expected in the way of social and individual change in a rural context, as the process of participatory education evolves.

Issue Seven: What would Constitute a Process of Rural Change that was Facilitated by a Process of Participatory Education ?

Rural change occurs when there is a break in the cycle of individual/community mental dependence and the self-negating externally derived self-concept, bearing witness to the emergence of a consciousness rooted in notions of self-determination and self-reliance and a choice to work towards maintaining non-controlling and trusting relationships in all interactions.

Proposition ten: Rurul change occurs when there is a developing sense of an individual and collective consciousness that is based on notions of self-determination, self-reliance and non-controlling and trusting relationships.

Rural change is initiated when the increasing awareness of non-participation channels itself into the need to take action through community organization -- action that seeks to and begins to break the social-economic-political-cultural structures that perpetuate dependence and control in relationships, both within the community and with those people and groups from outside the community.

Proposition eleven: Rural change is occurring when community organizations are working to break and/or mold social structures of dependence and control.

Sub-proposition eleven (a): This means that rural people begin to gain improved access to resources and start to address the physical and material obstacles to their participation. Community organizations begin to put pressure on the existing institutional environment to provide them with the resources that they need in order to meet their own needs. Some potential areas that would have a bearing on their material and physical prospects include water rights, land distribution and ownership, legal recourse on matters concerning unlawful seizure of land and property by feudal agents or the practice of bonded labor, access to public credit facilities and subsidized food/household products via the Public Distribution System, implementation of rural energy schemes often promised by public agencies etc.

Sub-proposition eleven (b): This means that rural people begin to gain a political, economic, social and cultural voice in regional and national forums that could obstruct/facilitate their participatory process. This implies that the rural poor, by virtue of their organized movement, win the option to participate in determining policy and planning decisions by bringing their concerns and visions to bear on macro-level processes which have important consequences for the realization of people's participation at the local or community level. This would mean that the rural poor now have a legitimate forum and have the legal and institutional ability to influence a process that was once the domain of the feudal and bureaucratic elite.

Sub-proposition eleven (c): This means that community organizations are working to break and/or mold the community structures of dependence and control. Community organizations also begin to address, in a self-critical manner, structures of dependence and control in their own communities. For instance, these organizations begin to address gender based issues and the need to promote and encourage women's organization and empowerment as part of the process of rural organization and empowerment or to examine caste based issues of subordination and control. These organizations would also begin to emphasize the need for self-determination and self-reliance through encouraging people's contributions in the way of materials, finance, knowledge and skills, labor, time and organizational effort.

This would apply to all forms of "rural development intervention" by all types of agencies (government, bilateral/multilateral/international, agencies, secular international NGOs, religious NGOs, indigenous NGOs, charities), aimed specifically at bringing about "improvements in the rural condition". While this proposition is really a part of the previous proposition, these agencies are isolated because of their deliberate and conscious "rural development objectives" and "missions", unlike the "other structures" incorporated in the general category of "social structure".

If these agencies work in terms of the proposed understanding of participatory change process, then they act as agents in the promotion of participatory process and they join the common struggle against the dominant process of non-participation. As agents of modernization as a process of envelopment, these agencies can only perpetuate a distortion of the participatory effort but as agents of development, the contributions of a modern culture can be put to good use in the service of the participatory process of all people.

Proposition twelve: Rural change is occurring when external agencies for rural change are acting to avoid being agents of non-participation and are learning to become agents of participation.

The presented "participatory perspective on education and rural change" suggests a "desired" and "possible" direction for rural change and the role of education in facilitating this process. The intent behind the presentation and development of this perspective and its potential strength will lie in its "reflexive ability" (for change agent practitioners and social researchers) and in its "ability to promote rural change" (for the rural people) and not in terms of its ability to "explain", "predict" and therefore enhance the possibilities for "controlling" the unfolding of a "mechnical social reality".

Finally, in concluding this effort to create a "desirable" and "possible" perspective, the following chapter, Chapter 10, discusses the objectives and the significance of this study and includes reflections on the research experience/method, concluding with some recommendations for future research possibilities/directions.

CHAPTER 10

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTIONS

This concluding chapter discusses the objectives and significance of the study outlined in Chapter 1. It also includes reflections on the research methodology and the research experience and future possible directions for research on participatory education and rural change.

Discussion on the Research Objectives

This study was undertaken with a view to develop a participatory perspective on education and rural change, guided by the following objectives:

1. To examine analytically the concept of NFE, primarily in terms of its stated purpose and prescribed role in the process of rural change.
2. To examine analytically the evolving concept of participation in the rural change process.
3. To examine analytically the possible link between NFE and participation in the rural change process.

These objectives were addressed with the help of: (1) change agent perspectives on the nature and desirability of participatory NFE for rural change -- perspectives that were developed as two case studies (Chapters 4 and 5), one concerning change agents engaged in an NFE Literacy Project for SAVE The Children (US) in Nepal and the second concerning agents from a Community Health Project jointly undertaken by Oxfam (Orissa) and BGKS in India; and (2) the conceptual and theoretical literature on (a) international/rural development, (b) participation and rural development, and (c) NFE and rural development.

The Purpose and Role of NFE in the Rural Change Process

When the process of rural change is construed as a process of assimilating the rural poor into a process of modernization (envelopment), the purpose of NFE is to facilitate this process of assimilation. NFE serves to "disseminate information" (NFE programs on literacy, health, family planning, vocational, agricultural etc.) and focuses on changing/modernizing the behavior of rural individuals and their communities through the process of diffusing "modern information and technique" in these related focal areas. The primary role for NFE is an "education as information" role as the program aims to "bring rural people into the modern mainstream in order to improve their lot". The claim that such programs also focus on "awareness raising education" as opposed to a strictly "education as information diffusion" role, really amounts to a process of "raising awareness" about "backward/inadequate behavior and understanding" or "correct behavior" and "the organizational means/methods necessary to link up with the structures of the modern state apparatus" in order to receive the benefits of modernization.

When the process of rural change is construed as a process for realizing rural people's need for "self-determination" and "self-reliance", then the purpose of NFE (often referred to as Popular Education in this case) is to "expose/de-mystify" the process of assimilation as a process of "dependence" and "control" that has contributed to people's stagnation. The assimilationist approach is seen as making false promises -- promises that can only be met if the people organize ("empower" themselves) and choose their course of change (even if this eventually implies a choice to enter the modern mainstream) as "subjects and actors" in the process of change (as opposed to uncritical and passive objects/recipients of a process of modernist assimilation). The role of NFE (as Popular Education) is to empower people through "critique" (of their condition and its relationship to the assimilationist process, local structures of domination etc.), through the act of organization to develop a rural movement for self-determination and self-reliance and through encouraging the practice of non-controlling and trusting relationship in all interactions -- "education as awareness raising". That is, NFE (as Popular Education) focuses on changing individuals (in terms of moving them away from an externally imposed negative self-concept and consciousness), relationship, communities, and the dominant social structures that these rural communities are imbedded in.

NFE (as Popular Education) also focuses on "education as information" but the purpose behind such dissemination is to facilitate the process of awareness raising and to add to the building momentum of a movement for self-determination and self-reliance (Popular Education programs for organization, political-economic-legal systems information like land and water rights or information on budgetary allocations of public funds or methods to improve access to the credit system or the PDS). Such information derives its utility from the expressed needs and aspirations of the participants and their ability/willingness to accommodate new information, based on their "existence rationality". This information is also subjected to the test of continual action and reflection in terms of its ability to change the prevailing condition of rural non-participation.

Participation and Rural Change Process

When the process of rural change seeks to assimilate rural people into the dominant process of modernization, participation is construed as process whereby rural people need to learn what it takes to adapt to the "dominant cultural-institutional framework" through a process that emphasizes their contribution (participation) in the following ways: (1) in terms of finances for externally conceived program costs, (2) time to take part in these programs and participate in numbers, demonstrating a keenness to assimilate the information being injected into their communities to "develop them" and (3) to contribute by learning how to organize (externally conceived models) and then to manage these organizations with a view to "link up" to the current/established state institutions. Participation is viewed as one "input" or a "means" to facilitate the achievement of externally conceived project objectives and to ensure long term sustainability because participation (in the manner suggested) would mean that "people would be more likely to feel that this is their project" and therefore find the motivation to take responsibility for the continuation of the project.

When the process of rural change is conceived as a process for realizing rural people's need for "self-determination" and "self-reliance", then participation is construed as a process of empowerment -- a process of removing obstacles to the realization of people's need for self-determination and self-reliance. That is, the process of rural change is the process of participation, as participation is the struggle (to remove obstacles) for realizing the people's need for "self-determination" and "self-reliance" (for people to be as subjects) in order that they may live to achieve their full potential as human beings. Participation is the means and the end, a fundamental dynamic of not just a project (as an input for a particular process of envelopment) but a process of development.

Participation is also construed as people's contribution and organization but both these interpretations of participation are subject to the more encompassing dynamic of participation as a process of empowerment, as suggested above. That is, people contribute to a process that works for self-determination and self-reliance as opposed to assimilation and envelopment. This means that people not only contribute their time, money, labor and skills but also their knowledge, their vision of the "good life", their hopes and aspirations and their ability to take charge of their process of change. People organize, not to "link up to the existing structures" but to mold these structures towards recognition of their needs which are a product of their desired process of change (needs as self-determined as are their organizational goals/objectives/mission).

The Link between NFE and Participation in the Rural Change Process

Under an assimilationist process of rural change, both NFE and participation are viewed as "inputs" that facilitate the process of modernizing rural communities. "Participation" is "injected" in various "dozes" into several projects (for instance, strictly technical transfer related projects in forestry or agriculture), including the NFE project, such as an NFE project focusing on improving rural literacy rates. The link between participation and NFE can be described, as was done in Chapter 4 (the case study from Nepal), as **"participation in a NFE Literacy Project"**, as "participation" (as per the associated conceptualization described above) is "injected" into an NFE process, such as the pedagogical, curricular and planning/management processes. People are encouraged to plan schedules and venues for classes, contribute fees, discuss attendance procedures, "add" to curricular materials in a "particular manner" (described by the facilitator) on a "particular topic" (e.g., hygiene/sanitation), help to build the school facility/space (if required) etc. There is no conscious educational effort aimed at participation as an educational objective/goal.

Furthermore, NFE is linked to participation (in the manner construed under an assimilationist perspective) in that it serves as a "process for providing information and motivation" for "participation in future/other projects", as NFE projects sensitize people to a desired/prescribed change process that has been mapped out for their benefit (refer to SAVE's rationale for NFE programs and future possibilities for "diffusion" and project "implementation" in Chapter 4). Since the process of rural development as modernization focuses primarily on "material/physical" improvements in the human condition (as a process it is concerned primarily with the economic), participation and NFE are both judged in terms of their contribution, as "segregated" inputs/ingredients, to the process of economic development. Consequently, the theoretical link between the concepts of rural development, NFE and participation does not emphasize "integration" but focuses more on maintaining a "clear separation/specialization" of the concepts.

When the processes of rural change and participation are seen as a process for realizing people's need for self-determination and self-reliance, the link between participation and NFE may be described as **"participatory NFE"** as was suggested in Chapter 4 (the case study from India), as the goal/objective (and process/method) of NFE (Popular Education) is to teach "participation" (as per the associated conceptualization described above). Participation and the teaching and learning about participation are a fundamental dynamic of the rural change process and not "separate inputs" to realize "other ends" (such as those of economic development). The process of rural development and change is a process of participation which in turn is a process of education as awareness raising. People and institutions change as people "participate" (process of rural change as a process of participation for realizing self-determination and self-reliance) and people participate as they educate themselves (about the need for and obstacles to participation) and people educate themselves about participation as they actually participate and therefore, actually change their condition. There is an attempt to view the concepts of rural development, NFE and participation as conceptually and practically "integrated" and "inseparable" and "inextricably linked". Distinctions between change/development, NFE and participation appear to be forced and, indeed, a product of the "mind set" of modernization.

Discussion on the Significance of the Research

Change Agent Perspectives

By attempting to let the "voices" of change agents determine the direction of this research study, an experiential perspective has been brought to bear on what has been a reflective endeavor -- a perspective that is vital to the process of rural change in the developing countries and to academic and reflective endeavors, such as this one, that are far removed from the untidiness and unpredictability of the process that these agents are engaged in. Hopefully, the inclusion of this perspective has enriched the reflective achievements of this study.

The study was also carried out with the view to assist change agents in their process of reflection on their practice, with a view to provide them with a renewed understanding of their role in rural education and change. This objective may have been achieved in the following manner: (1) since the study employed an interpretive methodology, change agents were able to engage in an open-ended process of reflection and introspection that could have influenced the way they think about the issues that the interview process (and the process of member checks) uncovered, (2) since the case studies were developed from a project conducted under the research sponsorship of the Fund For Supporting International Development Activity (FSIDA) at the University of Alberta, an extensive report was sent to the various participants, thereby providing them with the opportunity to read and reflect on points of view and conceptualizations developed by their colleagues working in other parts of the world, on different projects with different approaches to the question of rural development and (3) the inclusion of theoretical and conceptual understandings could also have served to assist participants with probing the assumptions behind their ideas and their practice, as the report introduced literature based perspectives in order to facilitate such a process of reflection.

Conceptual Integration of Participation and NFE

As stated in the introductory chapter, it was hoped that this study would prove to be of some theoretical/conceptual significance in terms of examining participation and NFE for the possible points of conceptual integration. This was felt to be of importance because of the need to improve conceptual clarity on atleast two counts: (1) the scope for alternative conceptualizations based on the different approaches to the rural development question and (2) the possible overlap between these concepts and the consequent need/possibility for conceptual synthesis and/or integration.

Without any prior intention or deliberate attempt at selection, the two case studies appear to illustrate two anti-thetical perspectives on rural development that are well represented in the literature. Consequently, what emerged was a field based perspective that helped to demonstrate how the concepts of participation and NFE are linked and integrated/segregated under the two approaches to rural development. This was, conceptually speaking, quite illuminating and ought to improve the attempt here to demonstrate the nature of the quest to establish the meaning of participation and NFE.

Problem Clarification in a Crisis of Existence

This study represents an attempt to "clarify the problem" of a crisis of existence and the appalling misery that a majority of the world's citizens have been condemned to live in. The different approaches to rural development clarify the different interpretations of what the development problem is and, consequently, what needs to be done in order to address this social catastrophe.

Reflections on Research Methodology and the Research Experience

The interpretive research methodology adopted in this study made it possible for participants to enrich the study with a variety of suggested meanings and interpretations that have contributed significantly in terms of the participatory perspective on education and rural change developed in Chapter 9. However, the research experience proved to be quite frustrating on several counts, which, when taken together, might suggest a certain potential and scope for utilizing other approaches to studying participatory education and rural change process.

(1) During the open-ended or semi-structured interview process, while it was possible for the researcher to probe and ask for clarification, the exercise was essentially a one-way process as the researcher "coaxed" the participant into presenting his/her meaning and interpretations. This proved to be an uncomfortable experience (for the researcher and the participant) on the following counts: (a) the relationship was essentially parasitic and even though the participant was "allowed", to a large extent, to determine the course of the data generation process, participants often felt like specimens of clinical examination as the process did not encourage mutual sharing and critique of ideas (such discomfort was voiced by more than one participant), (b) conversely, as the researcher, one felt "curbed" and "curtailed" as you had to deny your "agency" in the process by submitting to the need to maintain silence or a "veiled tolerance" in the face of expressed points of view that might have benefited from "frank questioning" and (c) the researcher was placed in the self-conscious and awkward position of "making the participant comfortable" (so that they felt free to "divulge") and therefore "made the pretense of a constrained sense of mutuality" (to divulge too much of yourself would be to bias the process -- after all, we are only after "their meanings") while all the while intending to play the role of the "gold prospector".

(2) Trying to achieve familiarity with people in the field over a limited span of time was a difficult task, especially when one was aware that others/participants often tended to construe your purpose as an intellectual exercise (for a PhD thesis) on a subject that demanded urgent attention in the way of "action to alleviate conspicuous human suffering". As one particular agent stated with a smile, "So, what are you going to do with this talk ?" A well thought out "intellectual reply" was not very convincing to either party, even though she turned out to be a veritable "gold mine of ideas" for the researcher.

(3) Although it has been recognized as a delimitation of this study, the absence of the voice of the "rural participant" could well be a limitation of the study. Going through the process of interviewing change agents talking about the "rural participant" sometimes felt a bit like prosecuting the accused in his/her absence. To be described as "backward" or as "dependent" or "mentally blocked" warranted a response and an explanation that was not to be. The rural participant was not included in this study, primarily on ethical grounds, given that the researcher was not comfortable with "making gold mines out of them" for a process that would have a remote bearing, if any at all, on their struggle.

The common link in the above "picture of discomfort" is that the interpretive approach utilized by the researcher separated the process of "knowledge generation" from the process of "individual/social change generation" that was being "scrutinized" from outside -- a passive etic perspective with seemingly little connection to the problem being studied other than the need to try and understand the meanings of those who were actively engaged in the change process. An emic perspective as an active participant in the process of rural change, integrating the process of individual/social change with the pursuit of the knowledge of the process itself -- learning through acting as opposed to learning from and about those who act would appear to be an approach for future research that would address most of the above "discomforts", including the possibility of engaging the rural participant's views on the subject. As a participant observer or a participant in a process of action research, such integration becomes possible. Furthermore, the emic perspective would provide different insights into the processes of education, participation and rural change -- the study of participatory education as a participant.

Reflections on Future Research Possibilities

The presented research possibilities outlined in this section concern areas of research that are built around the participatory education perspective developed in Chapter 9. Potential foci for research could include: (1) Emic perspectives on participation, education and rural change; (2) Rural participant perspectives on participation, education and rural change; (3) "Participatory communication and relationship" in a participatory education effort; (4) Participatory community organizations: Structures and processes, problems and prospects; (5) Participatory community organizations and structural change (community and external structures); (6) People's knowledge on organization; (7) What change agents have learnt from rural participants; (8) Material, financial and technological inputs as facilitators of the participatory education process; and (9) A longitudinal study on the evolving role and relationship of the Community Change Educator from intervention and first contact to detachment.

While these are some possible future foci for research aimed at studying and creating participatory process and rural change (the focus of empiricism is on the question of what can we and do we need to do to make it possible), the presented "participatory perspective on education and rural change" should be viewed as a base for reflection and not a theory that spawns a whole set of related empirical studies to "test its validity" or to determine its "theoretical significance" (to be rejected once data are in hand) in explaining social phenomena. The presented perspective is a blend of the "desirable" (normative position) and the "possible" (experientially based/empirical perspectives), thereby suggesting a desirable and possible direction for participatory education and rural change.

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